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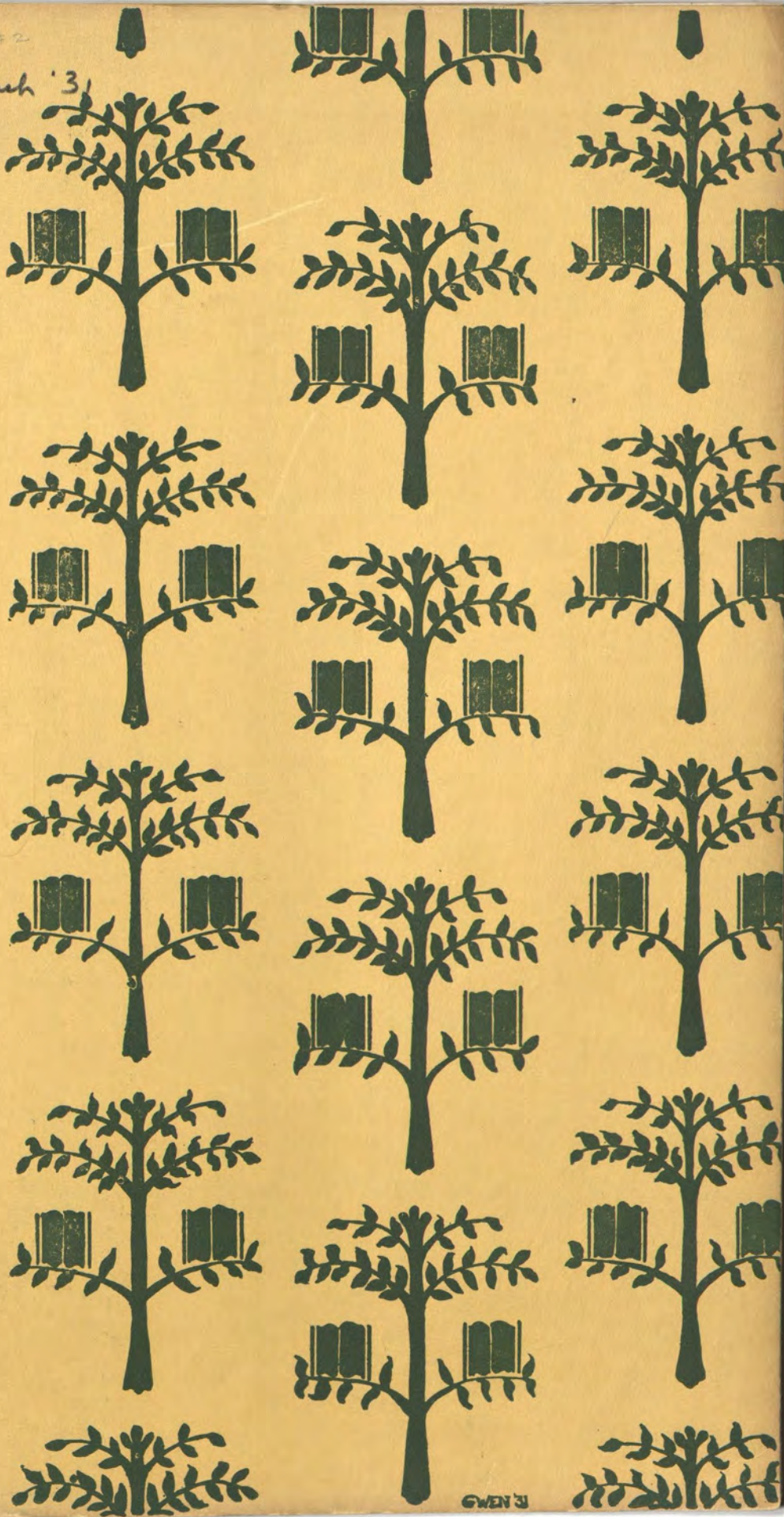

QUARTERLY

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Students and Alumnae are urged to contribute. All articles should be addressed to the Editor of the Connecticut College Quarterly, Connecticut College, New London, Connecticut. Terms: $.40 a year; $.10 the copy.

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SOMEONE STEADY AND SURE

"JIMMY dear, I just couldn't marry you," Anne was saying, in her warm voice with a breathless little note of pity in it. "I love you a lot, because you're such a dear, but—there's one thing—"

Jimmy watched her quietly as she lay back in the deep arm chair, and looked into the fire, waiting for him to say "What is the one thing, Anne?" Bright flickerings made her brown eyes shine, played warmly on her small, oval face, half in darkness. In her cheek a tiny nerve tightened for a second, and was still.

"What is the one thing, Anne?" he asked her, grinning a little, because he cared so very much.

Anne did not smile. She only looked at him. He was so dear as he sat there on the floor with the poker in his hand, with his grin like a twelve-year-old boy, and his cowlick, and his nice, nice eyes. She hated to hurt him.

"It's just this, Jimmy," she said, leaning forward a little. "You are such a crazy kid. Oh, I don't mean in years. I know you're twenty-seven, and I know you're one of the Star's promising reporters, and I know you're a dear—"

"The trouble with you, Anne," he grinned again—"You expect too much. Now what more can you ask?"

"Jimmy, I want a *man*." It surprised him to hear Anne's voice husky, to see her eyes dreaming into the fire. "A man to take care of me and protect me. I've taken care of myself and other people for so long. First there was the whole family, shiftless—and darling. Oh, I didn't mind, but it was hard. I was the only one who ever kept a job. And I was just seventeen. And then, after a while, there was only Mother, but it meant care. And now for a year there's been just me."

Seeing her deep eyes fill with a shining mistiness, Jimmy felt his heart thud in his throat. And then she blinked quickly, and went on.

"I've loved there being just me, in a way," she said, thoughtfully. "I've loved this dear apartment, and this fireplace and these books, and the having only my selfish self to worry about. But all the time—" she turned her eyes suddenly upon him—"I've been waiting for someone who could take care of *me*. I've never been protected and defended and sheltered. I've always done the sheltering. I've always been the one who was on the spot to help, and do the sensible thing. I don't want a husband I'll have to mother. Oh Jimmy, can I make you understand how badly I want someone who will *baby* me and *shield* me, someone steady and sure!"

"And I—I'm not steady and sure?" There was a little bitterness in his voice.

"No, Jimmy." She reached out and touched his shoulder. "You are everything nice but that."

He stood up, and moved away from her, into the darkness. "You said yourself that my job's promising," he ventured, "and I do love you."

It was a feeble straw thrown out into emptiness, and he knew it and waited, while a sodden grayness settled over him. The log in the fireplace crumbled, and fell, crackling, with a shower of sparks, and Anne's voice reminded him.

"There was the first time I met you," she said. "It was—on the subway."

Jimmy leaned back against the fireplace, miserable, remembering—.

The subway, six months ago. He had gone to sleep, hanging onto the strap. It had been a long, hard day—chasing a story from Macdougal to Desbrosses Street. Up all the night before at the year's record fire. Quite asleep, jostled by a fat, odorous Italian. Only half-conscious when the doors grated open at Times Square, and people began to pile out, and finally to pile in again. Almost too late when he woke up with a jerk and tore for the door, unseeing. There was a girl rushing in, but he did not see her. And, not seeing her, with his hat jammed over his eyes, and his jaw set grimly, he met her forcibly with all his six feet two and his football shoulders, and knocked her down. Knocked Anne down. The sincere misery of that moment swept over him now. Her little white face as she half lay on the pavement while the train clattered by them. Her brown eyes, glaring with anger. Her lips shaking, trying to find words. "You—you—Why don't you look—" And the sudden tears that came when she tried to stand up. "Oh dear! You've broken my ankle!"

He had loved her that moment, he thought, now, picturing himself as he helped her up the long subway stairs, apologizing profusely all the while, and supported her while he hailed a taxi. He listened hard when she told the driver where to go, and dashed to the nearest florist's to order three dozen pink roses. He did not know, then, of course, that she did not like pink roses. He did not know that her name was Anne. Only that she was Miss Forrester—and that it was really quite all right—and he didn't need to bother to telephone her the next day, and thank you very much.

He had not bothered to telephone. He had arrived at her apartment in person the next afternoon, to find her cuddled in front of this same fireplace, brown-eyed, and very surprised, with a badly sprained ankle.

"Not that I like you any the less for that first meeting, Jimmy—" Anne's voice interrupted his thoughts. "If it hadn't been for that I'd never

have known you. But it wasn't exactly—protective—"

No, thought Jimmy, grinning in spite of himself, it wasn't exactly protective—, knocking a girl down in a subway—, his girl.

"And it *was* rather typical." Anne was being thorough. She hated to be misunderstood. "Do you remember the Columbia-Cornell game? It's not that I *minded,* Jimmy, but, somehow—" She stopped irresolutely.

Yes, he remembered that game. He had known Anne about a month, then. And he knew that he was crazy about her. That game had been a chance to make an impression, and he had tried hard. Bill Andrews had gotten him the tickets, with difficulty, and he had kept them for two weeks, stuck in the corner of his mirror, where they reminded him vaguely of Anne. Not that he needed to be reminded! He had taken his old coonskin out of storage, and sent it to his tailor's to be patched in odd places. He had bought a new hat. And it had been a crisp, sunny autumn day. Busses full. Subways full. Streets full of college men and their girls, laughing. Anne had worn a little purple hat and a coat of some fluffy gray fur, and he had bought her the biggest bunch of violets that they encountered, tried hard to think of everything, and it was always hard for him to think of little things. She had been so darling, with her small hand in the crook of his arm, laughing up at him in the middle of the swirling crowds, telling him how she loved football games, and how she hadn't seen one for ages, and how dear it was of him to think of her. He had begun to feel quite debonair, and thoughtful, and very strong, pushing people aside who somehow got in their way, motioning to the boy with the programs majestically. And then, when they were near the stadium, he had reached for the tickets, and they were not there. Of course they *were* there, because he could remember thinking just before he left his room, "Now have I got the tickets?" But he felt surreptitiously in every pocket, and they were, strangely enough, not there at all. At first he had pretended that he was hunting for his handkerchief, but when the situation really became serious, and he had had to take out his billfold, and go through it carefully, with shaking hands, he had had to confide in Anne what had happened. She had laughed about it at first, and suggested other pockets, and made it a great joke. After all, you always did find things like that eventually—it was all a matter of keeping calm and searching every possible place. So they stood outside one of the huge entrances, with people hurrying by, men laughing, girls with banners laughing, all with tickets casually flaunted, calling to each other—"Well, Jack! How's everything? Betting for the city, I suppose!" "See you after the game, maybe. Dancing?"—stood there for long minutes, while he hunted, not very calmly. When it was finally clear that he really did not have the tickets, Jim still tried to be calm, nonchalant. "We'll get

there somehow," he said. "There are always speculators around somewhere, shouting." But that had been a popular game, and it was a gorgeous day.

Half an hour later they were riding down Broadway in a taxi, Anne smilingly protesting that it didn't matter, that a show would be just as good, and it was just one of those unlucky breaks that no one could help—probably someone had stolen the tickets out of his pocket, Jimmy trying to rise laughingly above his drenching, dulling feeling of gloom. They had seen a show, instead, with a great many legs in it, and several questionable jokes that made Jimmy blush, and that Anne did not seem to hear at all, which was fortunate. They had had dinner in a restaurant that turned out to be very crowded, and Anne had developed a headache that she said was nothing—she was having a lovely time. Finally, they had gone home, Anne still smiling sweetly, comfortingly, Jimmy still feebly grinning at her little jokes. He had been relieved when he reached his room. Now he could lie down on his bed, and go over the afternoon in his mind, miserably dwelling on every awkward thing he had said and done, and steeping himself in shame and a feeling of blushing stupidity. And of course no one had stolen the tickets. They were still in the corner of the mirror where he had put them two weeks ago to remind him of Anne.

"Lord!" He laughed a little now, to think of it. It had been funny. Anne laughed, too, breathlessly, as though she were relieved that he saw the funny side of it, and was not overwhelmed with depression.

"You see, don't you, dear?" she asked him, leaning forward, to look into his face. "I mean, you don't think I'm just silly, with an idea in my head?"

Jimmy grinned and bent down and kissed her suddenly, where the hair waved away from her forehead.

"Sure I know what you mean," he said. "You can't marry me because I'm not protective or dependable. I knock you down on subways, and I take you to football games and forget the tickets. I get you perfectly." He laughed a short laugh. To Anne, it sounded unpleasant.

"You don't get me at all," she went on. "I don't mind silly things like that once in a while. It's just that they hide you—somehow. They happen all the time—little things like them. Last night you got to talking about the Leviathan and almost killed us both in front of that taxi. The night before, you forgot to pay for the dinner, and the waiter chased us half a block. Last Saturday you couldn't take me to Maizie's because the tailor had your Tux and you'd forgotten to get it. I only got one of your four letters when you were on your vacation, because you sent them to the wrong address. You—"

"Anne! Please!" Jimmy threw his cigarette into the dying fire and walked a little stiffly to the other side of the room. "I didn't realize that I was such an imbecile, or that those things bothered you. I'm just thick, that's all, and I guess there's no use my hanging around, cluttering up your tracks. After all, I've always been that way. I guess I always will be. And, I don't believe those things would matter, if you loved me." His voice was hurt, somehow disapproving.

Suddenly, Anne was crying. She got up and came over to him, with a little sob. "Jimmy," she said. "I do love you. Just loving you, I *don't* mind those things. I laugh about them to myself, and think it's just you, and your dear crazy ways. But—there's a difference between loving you and marrying you. I want to depend on my husband, always. Jimmy, I can't depend on you now. But I could, if you'd *try!* If you'd try for a month, say. If you'd think—. If you'd love me enough to remember!"

She was crying hard, with his arms hard around her, his lips on her hair. He would never love anyone else, he thought. He had to have her. But it hurt his pride a little, his respect for his own inviolable identity when he promised her, with her wet cheek pressed to his, to try—for a month—to be dependable. Protective. Steady and sure. For Anne.

It was a long, hard month. Jimmy was working on exciting feature stories, and keeping late, irregular hours, and it is hard to be dependable when you are tired, and sleepy, with a head that aches at odd, inconvenient moments. When you are used to passing obliviously on your way, it is hard to remember to tip taxi drivers, before they follow you down the street with grumblings and muttered expletives. It is hard to keep your mind strictly on dependability and safety and the lady on your arm when you are crossing the street, if you are used to tearing in and out of traffic, missing trucks by the skin of your teeth, while policemen curse you, not always silently. It is hard to remember that seats must be reserved in advance, that February 14th is St. Valentine's Day, that girls appreciate umbrellas on wet days, and even rubbers, tucked in your overcoat pocket, if the weather has changed all of a sudden, that 5.30 under the clock means 5.30 under the clock and not 5.45 at the Biltmore. It is all very hard, demanding much concentration, and hours of planning, especially if you are well meaning, but unused to being steady and sure. It is all the harder when there are doubts preying disagreeably on your mind that you cannot seem to keep out. Jimmy had doubts.

Often, carefully making out checks for his room, for his tailor, for the florist, carefully depositing his receipts in a small compartment in his desk—Anne hated overdue bills, and the florist had once embarrassed him in front of her—they popped in on him. "Why do I do all this, when I hate it? If she loved me enough, would she care about this? This isn't

me! If she loved me enough to marry me, would this surface stuff matter? Am I being a fool?"

Often, on Tuesdays and Fridays, packing his laundry into a neat package, with his name printed beautifully on the top,—never again would Anne know that he was late because he had had to run out to buy a clean shirt,—he wondered, "Will she ever love me enough? Is it love, when stupid things matter? Unless she loves me as I am, does she love me enough to marry me? Is she right?" Sometimes he woke up thinking about it. But he kept on trying, remembering, with Anne's voice urging him on. "If you'd love me enough to remember!"

There were bad lapses, when his heart had sunk down to his boots and he had been afraid to look at Anne, because of the cold disapproval he might see in her eyes. He never mentioned them. Neither did she. They had never voiced the idea, but it seemed to be mutual, that this test was not to be discussed. Anly Anne's hand, squeezing his warmly, after an especially notable "coup de force" on his part, or her averted face when something was wrong, encouraged him or sent him suddenly to the depths.

There was the nightmarish two minutes at the St. Regis, crowded at midnight. He took Anne there to celebrate St. Valentine's Day, and she wore a new red dress with a little collar in front, and a low back, that made her look like an alluring, rather dangerous little girl. They had a table on the dance floor, just near enough the music. Anne was more darling than she had ever been. Jimmy was in a funny mood, and she laughed at him until the tears ran down her cheeks. Everything was perfect. They always danced well together, Anne's satiny head just reaching to his shoulder, and that night they discovered a new step that was smooth and exciting. They were in the midst of trying to practice it on the crowded floor, when Jimmy saw the face of a man dancing by him, and stopped short. It was the owner of a restaurant downtown, the clue to a story he had been trailing all day, who had dropped mysteriously from sight just when he wanted to find him. "Jimmy!" Anne was bewildered. Someone bumped them from the rear. A thin elbow jabbed Anne from the front. And suddenly, she was standing quite alone. Jimmy had left her. He had not gone three feet when he remembered, and turned back, alarmed. Anne was nowhere in sight. Frantically, he searched, the blood pounding in his head, elbowing couples madly out of the way. He saw a red dress through a convenient gap, and brushed roughly through irritated dancers, to find a middle-aged dowager, who should never have worn red at all.

She was sitting calmly at their table watching the dancers when he raced up, stammering, his hair on end.

"I thought you could find me more easily if I came back here," was all that she said, when he had finished his explanations that did not sound

very much like explanations after all. And she kissed him very sweetly when she said "Goodnight." But Jimmy did not sleep very well when he got home. The month was almost up, and he was wondering.

And at last, the month was over, entirely, and again they were sitting in front of Anne's fire. Anne had cooked dinner, and now the dishes were done, and all the lights were dimmed but the fire, and a little silence had fallen.

"I refuse to say, 'Well, have you reached your decision?' " Jimmy was thinking. "She knows damn well that it's a month, and I'm standing on my ear," when suddenly she was in his lap, cuddled softly against him, with her arms around his neck, and her soft hair tickling his nose, and it was all settled, wordlessly.

"You've remembered beautifully," she told him, later, when they had talked, and fallen silent, and talked again. "And I love you such a lot. Darling, you'll make a *very* dependable husband."

Loving her so that it hurt, Jimmy wondered. Afraid to say anything, because that would spoil it all, he kissed her and laughed. Afraid to say, "Love shouldn't be like this. Marriage shouldn't be fragile like this, resting on things that don't matter. I've done this all because I have to have you, I love you so much. But I wonder a lot. Love like this isn't enough. It breaks." After all, he had to have her, however much she loved him. They began to talk about weddings.

They were married in church. Silly, Jimmy thought, when there were so few people to come, but Anne had always dreamed, when she was a little girl, of being married at an altar, with a veil, and lilies, and an ivory satin dress, and it would be an insult to all her little girl dreams if she were married anywhere else. As it turned out, there were not so few people to come, as Jimmy had imagined. All his friends from the "Star" were there, and all Anne's friends from the office. Jimmy's odd relations, Anne's cousins, and uncles, and aunts. People they knew only a little, who loved weddings. Jimmy's old girls—there were not very many,—Anne's old beaux—an awe-inspiring number. Bill Andrews was the best man. He had served in that capacity many times before, and knew all the ins and outs of the business. On the way to the church, in a taxi that was halted at every red light on Fifth Avenue, he tried to sooth Jimmy by a recital of his own abilities that would eventually pull them both through.

"It's a cinch, old man," he told him earnestly. "Nothing to it. Just keep your head. The parson'll always whisper what you're supposed to do if you forget. I'll be there right beside you. See, I've got the ring here in my pocket, where it can't come out 'til I take it out. Just one thing—Be sure you grab it firmly when I hand it to you. Always makes

a mess if it drops and starts rolling. But don't worry!"

"Lord!" There was a new fear in Jimmy's mind. He had overlooked the possibility of the ring falling. Tripping over Anne's feet, forgetting the responses—he had pictured those all the night before with real sweat on his brow and fists clenched hard as he lay in bed. But dropping the ring—that had never occurred to him.

"Bill, if I ever get through this!" he groaned.

And then they drew up at the church, and everything was more or less of a blank. The silent preparedness of the little empty room where they left their hats and coats. The door opening. Music. Flowers. People—Good Lord! Thousands of people, craning their necks—staring. At Anne. Watching Anne, of course, because she was so lovely. Tiny—satin hair under the little wreath of orange blossoms. Fluttering little hands holding the calm lilies. Soft dark eyes smiling at him. Oh, yes, they were all watching Anne, but watching him, too, because he was close beside her. And he must not get nervous, or he would drop the ring. Whatever happened, he must not drop that ring.

The moment had come. He gripped the silver circlet as though he would never let it go, held it tight while he slipped it on Anne's finger,—breathed a sigh of relief. Almost all over now. Suddenly, his knees were shaking. Because it was almost over. What was happening? They were waiting for something. He felt eyes at his back, boring. What were they waiting for? He felt Anne's elbow touch him, and looked at her questioningly, his forehead furrowed deeply.

"Kiss me." Her lips barely moved.

Lord, he was making a mess of things. Forgetting everything, losing his head. It was all a blur. Anne's face lifted to his was a blur—two big eyes. Startled, with his heart pounding in his ribs, he reached down and kissed her hurriedly. Mustn't forget anything. He turned nervously, unseeing, to where the best man stood motionless, waiting. Everything a blur. Trembling, all over, he kissed him, too. Kissed the best man. Kissed Bill Andrews.

Then nothing was a blur any longer, but startlingly clear. The little rustle, the hushed laughter that ran over the church. Their eyes gleaming—laughing mouths politely covered. Bill Andrew's face, purple, Stoic-like, still the capable best man, but with a strained look around his eyes, his jaw set. Jimmy did not dare look at Anne. He knew what he would see on her face. Disgust—anger—even hatred, perhaps. His heart was lead. It choked him. He had done the inexcusable—made a joke of their wedding. The dependable husband. He had a sudden terrible desire to cry. In that one second before the organ began to play the march that meant it was all over, he remembered the story of the girl who had left her

husband on the steps of the church. Anne, leaving him on the steps of the church, because she had never loved him enough. She wanted someone steady and sure, and now—!

In that second, he felt a hand at his elbow, tugging a little. He did not want to look at her. He had to. And suddenly, his hands stopped shaking. His heart, very slowly, began to beat again. Anne was smiling at him, with white all around her like a mist, and her eyes shining. Shining, he saw, with tears, that were not sorrowful. Her smile was like nothing he had ever seen before, mothering, protecting, loving him. While he stared at her, unbelieving, her lips moved a little. He leaned closer. "I love you," they said.

Walking down the aisle, his heart was bursting with happiness. He felt very tall. He could touch the sky. He could do anything. He could be steady and sure all his life. She loved him enough. Suddenly, she loved him enough. Little things did not matter any longer.

ELEANOR TYLER '30

DELAY

There was a voice crying
In the wilderness of my heart.
Above the dull crashing
Of many branches, one against another—
Through the swishing
Of heavy vines and creepers
In a hidden wind
I heard it.
Because the darkness was clotted in my throat
I could not answer.
Because wet weeds were knotted about my ankles
Like thick snakes
I could not reach it,
This voice crying louder than moving leaves
My name.

But in the grey light
Of a dull, obscure morning
Buzzards, circling high and dropping,
Led me to you
Who would not call again.

MARY Q. HESS '31

PUPPY-LOVE

THIS is a hero-worshipping world. We all have had, since our earliest cradle days, our own little idols, thinking them golden, perhaps, at the time, and later finding them only clay, covered with a thin, all-too-transparent sheet of gilt. Romeo had his Juliet, Pericles his Aspasia, Dante his Beatrice, and Bobby had his Elaine.

Bobby was no different from any of the rest of us. He had had his idols before he met his Elaine. First there was his nurse, Annie, she who idolized him, who had coddled and petted and given way to him from the time when he was three months old. But at the tender age of five, he found out that Annie's two glittering, glistening, gleaming, gold teeth were not gifts of the fairies as she had told him, but of some sort of a demon, called a dentist, who had wanted to deprive him of his most precious possession, that wiggly and consoling front tooth of his which jangled back and forth whenever he pushed his tongue against it. Annie had lied to him. She was no longer his idol.

Then came his sister, Dolly he called her. She was so small and cuddlesome, and he loved to dangle bright red balls in front of her so as to see her pudgy little hands reach out to seize them as she chuckled and gurgled meaninglessly. He thought her perfect for a time, but soon Dolly grew older and grew teasesome. She began to cry for all of his toys. She broke his brand-new drum. She took his collection of mica and shiny pebbles and marbles and stamps and picture-books and threw them one by one out of the window. She took his Robinson Crusoe and colored all the pictures with water-colors which dribbled all through the book. She insisted upon intruding her small person upon all his thrilling games of pirate and king and in making herself a general nuisance. Soon Bobby had to realize that she, too, was not of pure gold—just another shattered dream; she followed Annie.

Bobby was growing older now. He went to school, and, bowed down by the worries and cares of a world of arithmetic and spelling and reading, and by friends and games with other boys, he had no time for such a thing as mere idols. He forgot Annie and Dolly. Women played no part in his world. Even his mother was just a nuisance who insisted upon his wearing rubbers and who put him to bed whenever he had a cold, so that he had to miss his all-important game of ball with the gang. His days were so crowded.

But by and by, Bobby grew older. He entered high-school and football became his aim. He went to the first game of the year and there, cheering loud rah-rahs with the rest of his schoolmates, for the first time

he saw Tom Paine. Tom was the captain of the school team. He was large and muscular and heavily built; he was battle-scarred and his nose was somewhat the worse for contact with the one hundred and fifty pounders of rival schools. But Tom was the epitome of the sublime to Bobby, for he could play football. When Tom wore a green tie one day, Bobby would wear one the next. Tom never did any school work, and Bobby, who surely thrilled at getting A's when his other friends got B's, and who really enjoyed studying in moderation, because a sympathetic upper-classman had told him that Tom "didn't give a hang about work and got through because the athletic coach would give his teachers hell if they dared flunk him," decided that study was effeminate. Tom was his idol for that whole year, but after his graduation, Tom was seized by one of the colleges who needed a good quarterback, and he soon faded out of Bobby's life and was forgotten.

And then came Elaine. She was beautiful. There was no getting around that. All the boys were crazy about her, and all the girls were jealous of her, and she revelled in a popularity which was astounding. She was a year older than Bobby who was now seventeen, but that made no difference to him.

He met her at a dance to which his mother had practically forced him to go. He hated girls, he hated dancing, and would have far preferred a movie; but his mother threatened to deprive him of that car, long-promised for his eighteenth birthday, if he did not go, so he dressed hastily and carelessly and without as much as a hat, went sulkily forth from the house. But he was soon sorry that he had not dressed more carefully, that he had disdained with such utter superiority and disgust the rose which Dolly had so solicitously tendered him for his buttonhole; for his hostess introduced him to Elaine. Immediately he was engulfed with a new sensation. Love had entered his very soul. Elaine first intrigued him because of her name. He had just been reading Tennyson in school and as poetically as any Lancelot or Gawaine, he thought of her as a present day "Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable, Elaine the lily-maid of Astolat." To be sure, this Elaine was a red-head imbued with the sophisticated desires of all the pleasures of a sophisticated world, and one would think of her more as a cigarette-girl than as a "lily-maid." But this did not phase Bobby. He loved her. He danced with her, and regretted his truancy from dancing-school. He walked with her in the garden, and blushed and stammered as he discussed with her the weather, the music, and the dance-floor; and he felt utterly stupid and dumb—as he had that never-to-be-forgotten day of shame when he had sat in the corner under cover of a dunce-cap, made out of the want-ad section of the Sunday paper. Yes, Bobby was in the midst of his first attack of love. He had that peculiar and most painful

of all the branches of the love-diseases which is known as puppy-love. He had it badly.

It was many a month before Bobby recovered from Elaine. In the interim, before she disillusioned him, he ran quite true to form, writing her lengthy and adoring letters, now telling of his intense and eternal passion, now fearing that she might not really love him, and now brimming over with that philosophy which puppy-love seems to produce. He even wrote poems to her, generally sonnets, entitled "To E- - - -," as it seemed so Shelleyesque to omit the whole name and to have only the first initial. He sent her monstrous corsages, which a giantess would have found a burden to wear, and plied her with all his high-school trophies, and made a general nuisance of himself to Elaine, who far preferred her college admirers (and those with cars in particular). She really tolerated him rather admirably and it was not her fault that Bobby came upon her at the wrong moment at the country club dance, when she was with Ellwood Powell, the season's best catch. Indeed she told him of her engagement to Ellwood even before it was officially announced. But Bobby was again disillusioned.

A few months later, when Bobby had completely recovered from the Elaine affair and was now enchanted by the hidden charms of one Janet, he told her, as she doubted whether she was really the first, that "Elaine was just a puppy-love affair, but that this was 'the real thing.' " Oh, yes, Bobby was completely recovered from Elaine—another shattered idol.

CARRYL SIMONSON '31

NAILS AND A SWORD

(A poem for Good Friday)

Pound! Pound! Pound!
  Round holes—round
(Is that a woman weeping
  There on the ground?)

Drip-Drip-Drip
  Winking red drops
(Lay hands upon that woman
  Unless she stops!)

Nails and a sword
  Are fine playthings—
Red and white has often been
  A color scheme for kings—

LOIS TAYLOR '31

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

OF the specific facts of Edna St. Vincent Millay's life we are told little else than is spoken by her poetry. That she was born in Rockland, Maine, in 1892, we know; but of the tomboy who wandered the Maine Coast, and loved to roam among the fishing shanties, and knew old, creaking piers, we read in some of her most moving and vibrant poetry. We know that she has graduated from Vassar, that she has travelled, acted, given readings, and known poverty and comparative ease in that most relentless, vital city, New York. We know that her life has been crowded with companions, friends, lovers of all kinds, that she has thrown herself with abandon into adventures of beautiful, gay, and tragic sorts, and that she has drawn from them these ironies, these idealisms, these symbolisms, these lithe subtle flashes and imageries of emotion and philosophy that are her poetry.

"Renascence," written when Edna Millay was about eighteen, is the work of a child in whom had developed a precocious sensibility of the intensities and greater facts of this existence. It is a poem of desperate faith, a comprehensive expression of her philosophy, so to speak, her sense of miracle in life and death. The poetry which follows is, much of it, superficially *vers de societe;* and yet under many of these cold pessimistic ironies and frivolities lies the real meaning of the person,—a person bearing not the most modern of modern spirits, as one might suppose, but an austere and ancient religious idealism. "It is a belief in something beyond this mortal life, the immortality, in this case, of art." Something of this idealism is found expressed in a sonnet to a mortal lover in one of her first volumes of verse, *Second April.*

> "Ah, but indeed, some day shall you awake,
> Rather, from dreams of me, that at your side,
> So many nights a lover and a bride,
> But stern in my soul's chastity, have lain,
> To walk the world forever for my sake,
> And in each chamber find me gone again!"

Of Miss Millay's pessimism, a brave, vital pessimism, there are many examples, some of them in *Second April:*

> "Not only under ground are the brains of men
> Eaten by maggots.
> Life in itself
> Is nothing,
> An empty cup, a flight of uncarpeted stairs."

"And once again, and wiser in no wise,
I chase your colored phantom on the air,
And sob and curse and fall and weep and rise,
And stumble pitifully on to where,
Miserable and lost, with stinging eyes,
Once more I clasp,—and there is nothing there."

At the same time as this early poetry, there appeared a few plays, some of them written and performed at Vassar. Of these, *Two Slatterns and a King* and *Aria Da Capo* are the best examples of her symbolic, ironic style. *Aria Da Capo,* which has been called a masterpiece of irony, is composed in a delightful style:

"Columbine
Pierrot, a macaroon! I cannot live without a macaroon!

Pierrot
My only love, you are *so* intense. . . . It is Tuesday, Columbine?
I'll kiss you if it's Tuesday."

The Lamp and the Bell, a symbolic play concerning the meaning of love between two women, is a wonderfully moving piece of work, and touched with poignant beauty of expression and conception in every line.

A few words should be said of her prose, of which the amount published has been insignificant. *The Murder in the Fishing Cat* is a thoroughly touching and colorful story of the French owner of the Restaurant du Chat Qui Peche, and of his eel, Philippe. It is written in a spirit essentially French, and it gives the most anguishing suggestions of human feeling. Its effective simplicity reveals a capacity in Miss Millay for calling out the emotions of the reader by mere suggestion, and by her unusual phraseology. The liquid rapidity of the narrative smacks of Julian Green. I shall quote two passages that intimate, to some extent, the peculiar appeal of her prose style:

"The days went by and nothing happened in them. Every day a few people came to eat there. Once there had been ten at a time, and Jean-Pierre had said to himself that he would have to get a waiter, if this kept on. But it did not keep on."

"A young woman was sitting under the tree, embroidering, but she was not Margot."

After *Second April* (1921) came *A Few Figs From Thistles* (1923), the *Harpweaver, and Other Poems* (1923), *The King's Henchman* (1927), libretto for the opera, and *Buck in the Snow* (1928). Considering, in this

sequence of volumes, her poetry as a whole, a distinct, gradual change is noticeable. *Second April,* probably written by a child living in poverty in Greenwich Village, is tinctured by a longing for the Maine Coast, and filled with memories and thoughts of college experiences. In fact this volume includes a Memorial to "D. C.," (Vassar College, 1918). The death of this friend

> " . . . that was so proud and wild,
> Flippant, arrogant and free,"

brought forth some of the loveliest, most simply sincere of her verse.

> "Give away her gowns,
> Give away her shoes;
> She has no more use
> For her fragrant gowns;
> Take them all down,
> Blue, green, blue,
> Licac, pink, blue,
> From their padded hangers;
> She will dance no more
> In her narrow shoes,
> Sweep her narrow shoes
> From the closet floor."

> "Let them bury your big eyes
> In the secret earth securely,
> Your thin fingers, and your fair,
> Soft, indefinite-colored hair,—"

In *A Few Figs From Thistles,* particularly in the poems "First fig," "Second fig," "Thursday," "To the Not Impossible Him," how neatly she upsets the carefully built walls of convention which men have built about their Ideal Woman, even while they fought, bled, and died for all the Helens and Cleopatras they happened to encounter! As an example I shall quote "First fig":

> "My candle burns at both ends;
> It will not last the night;
> But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends—
> It gives a lovely light!"

From these poems we pass to a mood, in *The Harpweaver and Other Poems,* which is more relentless and bitter, in many cases. There several pieces on death, several sonnets that in their fastidiousness of execution

are all the more sharply, and sometimes passionately pessimistic,—and perhaps pessimistically passionate. Most of the loveliness in this collection is to be found in the "Ballad of the Harpweaver" itself, which is a beautifully symbolic piece presenting the protective power of a mother's love. These are the last three stanzas:

"There sat my mother
With the harp against her shoulder,
Looking nineteen
And not a day older,

A smile about her lips
And a light about her head,
And her hands in the harp-strings
Frozen dead.

And piled up beside her
And toppling to the skies
Were the clothes of a king's son
Just my size."

"To One Who Might Have Borne a Message" is representative of the easy abandon, the recklessness of gesture that are so often coupled in Miss Millay's poetry, with the striking and yet delicate individuality of her ideas. For this reason, and because of the rather unusual fact that she addresses much of her verse to women, I include the whole of this poem. It is fairly safe to conjecture that it was written of "D. C." whose Memorial is found in *Second April.*

"Had I known that you were going
I would have given you messages for her,
Now two years dead,
Whom I shall always love.
As it is, should she entreat you how it goes with me
You must reply, as well as with most, you fancy;
That I love easily, and pass the time.
And she will not know how all day long between
My life and me her shadow intervenes,
A young, thin girl,
Wearing a white skirt and a purple sweater,
And a narrow pale blue ribbon about her hair.
I used to say to her, 'I love you

Because your face is such a pretty color,
No other reason.'
But it was not true.
Oh, had I only known you were going,
I could have given you messages for her!"

And finally, we find the sea-homesickness still pervading her poetic motives, as it did so strongly in *Second April.* In "Memory of Cape Cod," she achingly breathes:

"Let me listen to wind in the ash. . . it sounds like surf on the shore."

The King's Henchman is an opera for which Deems Taylor wrote the music and Edna Millay the libretto, in "diluted" Anglo-Saxon. One of the first native American operas, it has had unusual publicity. Of the many praises and criticisms, Mark Van Doren's review was perhaps the most unprejudiced. He stated that "there are a dozen lines, or groups of lines in which Miss Millay is witty, in the poetical sense, as no other living poet can be." In particular he called attention to the line:

"I could do mousily by a crumb of cheese."

Also he said that "there is abundant evidence that Miss Millay is a surpassing poet; she has not in this case written a surpassing poem." To me, one of the most stirring spots of all dramatic literature is Aethelwold's sudden desperate entreaty to his wife, when he secretly finds that he is to lose her.

"Aelfrida, swear, swear—
Ere ever the waters rise,
And stop the mouth, and hide the eyes,
And Love be a shriek in the ear that hears nothing, nothing!—
Swear thou wilt not forget the love that was between us,
How sweet it was."

Criticism has been made that much of the Anglo Saxon in the play is anachronous, and that much of it is not singable. But it is difficult for most rational people to overlook the intrinsic charm and force of the really dramatic poetry of a large part of the work.

We now consider the *Buck in the Snow,* which, from the point of view of the author's development, presents a spirit more mellow, more tolerant, more vigorous than ever before. Almost every poem in the volume discloses a mood entirely new to us in this strangely versatile woman. She seems subtler, her sensuous qualities more pungent, more truly rare. How very quickly and surely we smell and feel and see and

taste and hear, in the first few lines of the poem written "For Pao Chin a Boatman on the Yellow Sea":

> "Where is he now, in his soiled shirt reeking of garlic,
> Sculling his sampan home, and night approaching fast—
> The red sail hanging wrinkled on the bamboo mast;"

And certainly she has been storing strength for such a thing as "Moriturus"—a stinging revolt against death, which ends:

> "With all my might
> My door shall be barred.
> I shall put up a fight,
> I shall take it hard.
>
> With his hand on my mouth
> He shall drag me forth,
> Shrieking to the South
> And clutching at the North."

Perhaps these poems dwell more on beauty for its own sheer sake than those in any previous collection. There is surely, too, more of contradictory material. Here we find her bitter over the loss of a friend to someone else ("Evening on Lesbos"), or in quiet contemplation of a long-ago discomfort

> " . . . of loving you,
> Ineffable you, so lovely and so aloof,"

We listen to the gay, warbling "Counting-out-rhyme." We are depressed, mysteriously, by the lavish beauty of "Pueblo Pot":

> "Powerful was the beauty of these birds.
> It boomed like a struck bell in the silence deep and hot."

And how magically the "Pigeons" are suddenly heard;

> "How they conversed throughout the afternoon in their monotonous voices
> never for a moment still;"

And ever and again recurs the sea-longing, that has ripened even as Edna Millay has herself:

> "Striken too deep for tears,
> I stand, remembering the islands and the sea's lost sounds. . .
> Life at its best is no longer than the sandpeep's cry,
> And I two years, two years,
> Tilling an upland ground!"

wild fleet creature, Edna Millay. It is possible that we shall have to be content to catch her in only a few of her innumerable moods. And even then it is a mistake to say that this, or that, is Edna Millay. We must gather her in from all directions, from the woods and fields and sky and earth, from her companionships and loves, and even then we will have only a part of her, a pitifully small part! And so, finally, we learn to abandon the making of a whole picture. We shall think, in slow succession, of her haunting beauties in thought and expression, rarely specific or descriptive, suggestive rather. There are the sudden subtle touches, the agonizing grace, quick imagery, magic of sound. There is her complete and unabashed sincerity, her expression of the incisive *true* thing as she has discovered it and feels it. Oh, strangely contradictory, wilful, moody, whimsical, loving and forgetting creature!

MARY F. SCOTT '32

LOONY CHARLEY

HE was sitting there that afternoon on the doorstep of the little house where he had lived for so many years. The sight of him with his bare grey head, his mild blue eyes, and his pink cheeks made a charming picture against the whiteness of his little house and the green of its front door. Few people, however, in the little town ever thought of him as picturesque; indeed, none of them ever stopped to consider him as anyone but "loony Charley," the harmless idiot of the village.

On this particular afternoon, he was whittling out little toys and whistles for children when some of the village boys dropped in to talk with him, and perhaps to tease him a little. Old Charley liked the boys—they seemed so jovial and kindly, and he took their teasing as a real interest in him. During the course of conversation, one of the boys produced a bulky magazine—the mid-summer advertising edition of a well-known mail-order house.

"Look here, Charley, at these women! How'd you like one o' them for a wife? All you got to do to get one is send in the number under the picture of the one you want, and as much money as it says, and she'll come right to you! You ought to have a wife, Charley. Better send for one."

This cry was immediately taken up by all the boys, and they laughingly impressed on Charley his need of a wife.

A little later, the boys went on their way, and old Charley remained seated, whittling, and pondering over and over in his head all that the boys had said about the women in that catalog. It would be nice to have a wife—someone to talk to in the evening, and he could whittle no

end of little nicknacks for her—women liked nicknacks, he knew. He looked about him—yes—the boys had left the catalog, and taking it in the house he laid it on the table very carefully.

That night old Charley sat up late. One after another he scanned the pictures until he finally found one who seemed ideal. She had a sweet face, and beneath her picture it said:

> "May be had in black or white. 18 through 42. Stock on hand. Immediate delivery on receipt of $8.50."

Laboriously Charley got out pen, paper and ink and wrote to the concern, stating that he wanted a "White one, 42," and would enclose the money for immediate delivery.

For several days Charley went about beaming. He cleaned his little house thoroughly, and then sat back to wait. As he whittled at his little toys, he fairly glowed inside at the thought of this woman who would bring so much cheer into the house—she should be coming soon.

That afternoon the same lads dropped in on their way home from school. One of the liveliest, remembering the subject of the previous week, asked jokingly if Charley's wife had arrived yet.

"No," replied old Charley, "not yet. But she'll be here soon now, for her dress arrived this very morning from the same place."

Laughing heartily at old Charley's simplicity the lads again went on their way, while old Charley went inside to put on his best blue suit. She might arrive any minute now.

DOROTHY C. STEVENS '31

SONNET

You sit there with a hand across your eyes—
Along the wrist the veins stand high and blue—
Forehead and cheek are shadowed symmetries
In clouded ivory that is not flesh of you.
You sit there like the image carved in stone
That from cold height looks down yet never sees
Him who adores. Once mutable you have grown
Immutable as Venus to Praxiteles.
Have you forgotten that my hair you found
Soft to the fingers, that inevitably
The farther edge of laughter merged with sound
Of silent, nameless weeping inwardly?
Betray no pulse nor move your lovely head
Until I go in peace, thinking you dead.

MARY Q. HESS '31

CYNARA SPEAKS

"Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara, in my fashion."

Ernest Dowson

HIS is a queer way of keeping faith.

He comes to me when it is all over; and I know without looking that his face is tired and that the shadows of other women haunt his eyes. He comes over to where I sit by the window, a green book close shut in my quiet hands, my gaze fastened stubbornly on a sharp black tree on a distant hill. I hear him coming but I know he would rather I didn't look just at first. I know he is close beside me staring out the window too—looking at the tree. The tree is a kindly impersonal meeting place for our eyes, a calm tryst, the thing in common we need at the moment. We can look at each other after having shared the sight of it.

I turn to see his mouth that has taken so much it did not want, at his eyes that have seen, his hands that have touched, things that he hated. Before he looks at my face his gaze stops a while with my quiet fingers. When he leans closer I can see my face reflected in the pupils of his eyes—a face tiny and convex and afraid. But it has cleared his eyes of the faces of other women.

He makes no protestations, no excuses when he returns. He knows that what I guess I forgive, being that sort of woman. He does not know that what I don't guess his face betrays. And I forgive these things, too.

His face tells a story of white wines and red, clear and fragrant and bittersweet in crystal, vinegar on the lips; of thin fragrant slices of meats, pungent and golden on the platter, ashes in the mouth; of yellow light from a thousand candelabra gleaming on linen, on silver, on rosewood, on the bared shoulders of women. His face tells me of dim rooms and dark intimacies, of women with cold eyes and predatory mouths; of delirium and clouded senses; of finished feasts and lamps gone dead; of waking to find the dawn is grey.

Looking at him here by the window I see all this in his face and love him none the less. I think I love him more because I know I am to him what no other can be. It is worth the trouble and travail of loving to know that I am as unique in this man's life as death, something that can happen only once, an experience exquisitely rare. To know that there are others who happen to him often, who duplicate each other again and again, is of no matter. He must come back to me as surely as he must

come back to death; and though I may be as death to him, that is of no consequence so long as he comes back that I may be an urn for his ashes.

And so as we sit by the window I look long at his dark face streaked with the scars of his civil war, at his eyes that worship me as if I were the ultimate purity, a clean white death.

My hands on the green book are very clean and white and quiet.

I reach out slowly and touch his shoulder, and slide my hand gently along the smooth slope of his head. It is a familiar gesture we understand. I have made him whole. Virtue has gone out of me.

He lifts his face, knowing that I understand and forgive. Dusk hides the scars, shadows shield his eyes.

Would he want my forgiveness if he knew that I am as those other women of whom he is ashamed? Could he forgive me if he knew why I so easily understand? Both of us keep faith in the same fashion, but only one of us can forgive.

And so, on the green book my hands lie quietly, very white and clean.

MARY Q. HESS '31

Going down the little white road to White Town,
What did I see, what did I see?
I saw three barefoot children
Who waved to me.
And I left the little white road going to White Town
And played in a field all day;
And we all ran after a brook
That was running away.

Going down the little bright road to Crimson Town
What did I see, what did I see?
I saw three lovely creatures
Who waved at me.
(And I left the little bright road going to Crimson Town)
And they gave me kisses to wear,
And we all went looking for poppies
To put in our hair.

MARY F. SCOTT '32