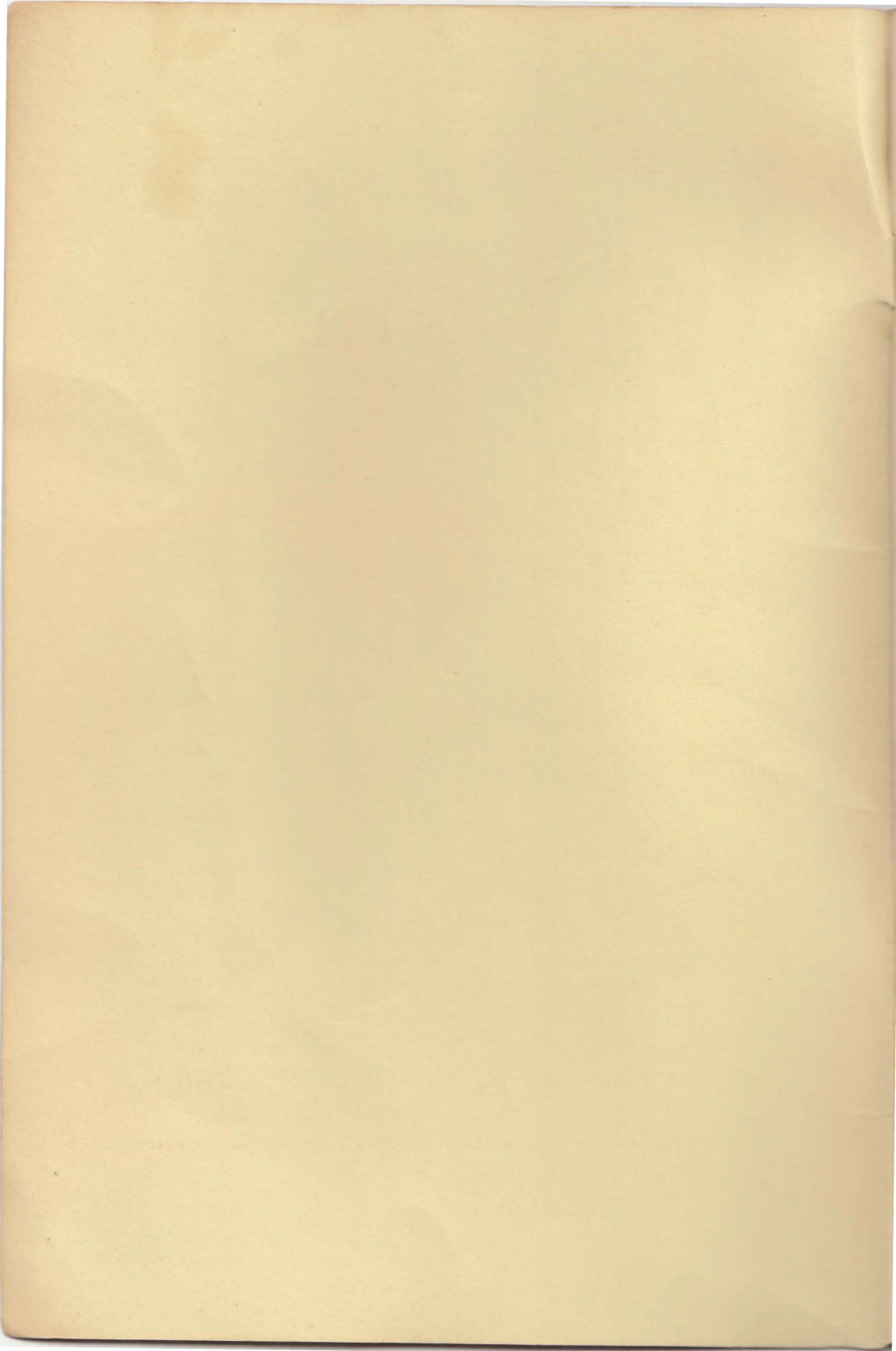


# Manuscript

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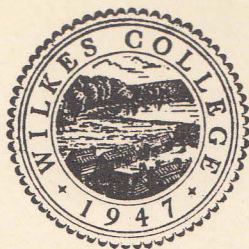
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# Manuscript

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WILKES COLLEGE



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# The Angels of Beaver County, Pa.

Wendell Clark

In 1825, every salt lick settlement had its share of transients, all of whom, with one hope and purpose, followed the downward path of the sun. Many of these men died, with faith in their hearts and pain in their eyes, and were covered over with carelessly piled rock which would mark forever the route of the western trails. This tide of humanity, rolling westward, carried on its crest the debris of a nation. Men, women, and babies jolted across the wagon-rutted trails, driving their pigs, carrying their Bibles, and taking kindness, violence, and indifference with them.

Against this tide, Father Rapp, a tall, patriarchal man with abundant white hair, led a small gray-coated following toward the distant blue hills of Pennsylvania. There, in some quiet valley, flowing with milk and honey, he hoped to build a way of life which the foreigners of Indiana had denied him. The citizens of New Economy, Indiana, had stopped up their ears and hardened their hearts until Father Rapp realized that happiness would have to be sought elsewhere.

Father Rapp was a strange man. An angel had talked to him and had given him vision to see the true way of life. The angel revealed to him that the day of the trumpet was near at hand, and the walls of the world, and of Indiana, would shatter and fall. Only the wise would be saved, the angel had said, and he had given wisdom to Father Rapp, who would live to hear the terrible call of the trumpet and to see the angelic host descending, sickles in hand, to reap the harvest of the world. Father Rapp had gathered around him a chosen few and formed a religious Utopia: a sort of Biblical communism with paradise as the ultimate end. These people, the Rappites, also called themselves "Harmonists," because harmony, achieved by celibacy, economy, and a sharing of material wealth, would permit them to live like angels until heaven and earth passed away and only paradise remained.

The trail to Pennsylvania was long and weary; rabbits scuttled to the underbrush in dusty pairs and stopped, fearful and quivering, to watch in moist-eyed wonder the labored progress of the Harmonists. Father Rapp, following a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire, led the small band into the haven



of a small, green valley in Beaver County. Here he paused and surveyed the rich land and the sheltering hills and found it good. Here was lodging for the angels for the short time remaining to the earth. Until the end, however, there was work for the earthly angels to do and wealth to be gained and shared. Accordingly, the city of Old Economy was planned and constructed. The valley brought forth a temple, community gardens, orchards, fields and factories; and, under the startled trees, a city of geometric streets and celibate life arose.

Old Economy prospered in the new land. Father Rapp, whose gift of heavenly vision had apparently sharpened his earthly vision, had an eye to the possibilities of production by free labor. Under his guidance, the fields poured their yellow treasure into the granaries, increasing herds of sheep drifted like clouds over the pastures, and, in the muddy depths of the pigsties, pigs ate voluptuously, under a dim compulsion, and grunted a chorus of indifference to their fate. The factories spawned great quantities of brooms and hats. Father Rapp looked upon his handiwork and found it both good and profitable. A good deal of the wealth passed through his hands and into his home, a large pretentious building called "The Great House," which had dining tables, good china, heavy silverware, portraits, and a servant.

During the long days, the Rappite workers toiled in the fields and factories to hasten the death of time. In the golden dusk of the evenings, they walked in the flowering community gardens, around the silver moat of the garden Temple, and talked of paradise, while, in the trees overhead, the gray mourning doves huddled together and spoke softly to each other in rich pagan tones. At night, the workers slept in the crowded warrens, breathing the cramped, odor-packed air, and dreamed of love which was not all angelic.

Celibacy was a difficult ideal in a community made up of married people, vowed to celibacy, and healthy young people, whose eyes were filled with the sights of the ardent wooing of Nature, and whose ears were full of talk about the prolific Mormons and the free-loving Owenites. Feeling the emphasis of nature on fertility, a few daughters of Babylon walked from the path of wisdom. When their sins swelled inside their minds and bodies and became evident to heaven and earth, the condemning eyes of the Harmonists arrayed them in purple and scarlet and burned the name on their foreheads.



Father Rapp threatened and punished the fallen angels; he molded them on the wheel of instruction and taught them to crush the evil underfoot. However, their heels remained bare, and the serpent hid in the garden, under the pollen-laden flowers, occasionally tasting of flesh.

The striving of the Harmonists for the impossible was the cause of many disturbances within the bounds of Old Economy and many a laugh without. The outside world mocked the little colony and stoned it with words. Even Lord Byron, the Prince of Cynics, wondered aloud in his poem, "Don Juan," how a state without wedlock could be called "Harmony."

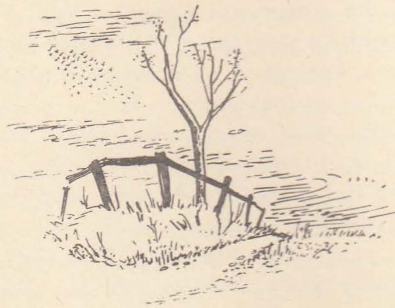
Seasons gave birth to seasons, and, in spite of their problems, the Rappites flourished. Father Rapp, aging, dreamed of the time of reaping of the ripe harvest of the earth and of the shining city where emerald and jasper walls sparkled and glowed, as luminous as Moses' face, and where the streets were a crystal-clear gold. And sometimes his dreams altered, like reflections on rippling water, and he saw Moses, encircled by swaying, chanting dancers, kneeling before the molten calf; or, he stood with the elders, whose names he could not recall, and listened to them tell of the great flood, while the child Noah played in the sand at his feet. After a period of dreaming, Father Rapp died, with a curious wonder on his face.

The Rappites, shaken by this obvious neglect of God, who had promised them paradise within their lifetime, tried to remain true to their ideals. But the flaming spirit of Father Rapp, ignited by the burning bush, was no longer there to restrain the magnetic forces of nature and many of the younger Rappites deserted the colony. The older ones, unable to reorder their faith, remained.

The years passed. The Rappites withered and declined and came to the only possible end for a celibate group in which there was no outside interest. They perished, by ones and twos and threes; foreign hands took over their factories; a steel corporation took over their lands and a fiery furnace might have flamed where men once worked and dreamed of angels, had not a historical society stretched out a protective wing and sheltered the remaining buildings of Old Economy.

Today, the Great House, the Garden Temple, and the Community Gardens are kept in good repair as monuments

to a social experiment which failed by reason of its success. At least, Father Rapp was a success, and, as far as the monument is concerned, he may have preferred the fiery furnace; undoubtedly he would have considered it more appropriate.





## The Red Rooster's Destiny

Dale Warmouth

The red rooster's destiny is holiday dinner.  
The honey of his lecherous throat  
with which he addressed his harem  
will make his browned flesh sweet--  
the brass of his cocksure throat  
with which he flung his verbal gauntlet down  
at four o'clock each morning  
will make him glitter brightly on the platter.  
He is surprised to find himself  
swinging spurs upward in the air  
as he writes graffiti cursively  
with his blood upon the snow.

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Avenue, Los Angeles 34, California.  
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## Can't Sit Still

Constance P. Smith

Want to make my hands move all the time

Can't sit still!

Want to play a tune or write a rime

Can't sit still!

Want to draw, cook, knit, or sew

Rake the leaves, weed a garden row

Do something, keep on moving--oh! I

can't sit still!

Sit in class and scribble, page on page

Throw things when I'm in a roaring rage

No matter what I do--

It's simply hopeless to--even try--

Sitting Still!

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## The Nightmare

James M. Neve ras

A knock on his cabin door awakened him from a miserable dream.

"0515, sir."

"Thank you," he replied, as he slowly threw back the covers and crawled out of his bunk. A rainy, foggy dawn, still smelling of the long darkness, seeped through the open port above his bunk.

The Captain of the destroyer *U. S. S. Atkinson* shuddered, not from the dampness of the night but to shake off the lingering nightmare. This same horror had haunted him for the past sixteen years. He stood there in his cabin listening to the sounds of the ship that meant a rough sea--the pounding of stern plates clashing with the waves, the fog horn with its weird groan, the engines slackening with several slow jerks noticeable only to a true seaman.

Well, here it was, that long-dreaded moment. They would be running past the Point, that ghostly graveyard, in thirty minutes or so. The Point. . . the old fear was gradually creeping over his entire body more than ever before, for this time he would not be able to dodge command of his vessel as it rounded the Point. He began dressing rapidly, trying to escape the haunting memories lingering in his weary mind.

He had been a junior officer when it happened, the gunnery officer of the old *Barbara Ann*. The *Barbara Ann* had followed four sister ships to the beating rocks of the Point. Brill had been thrown out of his bunk when she struck. Darkness, moans of injured men, cries of the drowning, screams of the firemen as the boiler burst, the one lifeboat--these were the haunted memories of the Point. Each nightmare had brought back these memories more clearly. The desperate expressions on the faces of his fellow seamen were driving him crazy. Several times since, he had rounded the Point. Each time before, he had invented a satisfactory excuse to turn the command of navigation over to some other officer. This time, this time he had to face the terrors.

Captain Brill shrugged into his uniform and slipped on his hat as he closed the cabin door behind him. None of his



officers suspected his fears, his nightmares. Before, he had merely allowed the watch officer who happened to be on the bridge to keep charge of the ship. This time his watch officer, O'Donnell, had been on duty for six hours and there was no one but himself to relieve Helferty. Each time before, the *Atkinson* had run past the Point in fair weather. This time a sticky fog was increasing Brill's misery.

The fog siren sounded again. Brill shrugged his shoulders in despair. This time there would be no dodging. Perhaps the ship was on her course, well to the west of the Point; perhaps nothing would happen, as nothing had happened many times before. But the thought of being in command as the destroyer rounded the Point caused his heart to quail.

He climbed the ladder to the bridge, his knees shook, and his lips trembled. Would he see the sharp, pointed rocks, the scene of his extended nightmare again? The drizzly fog made his face stiffen, and his lips ceased trembling. The fog was dangerously heavy and the sea treacherously rough. The wind was dead ashore. Just the sort of weather...!

"Good morning, sir."

"Good morning."

"Nastiest weather we've run lately."

"Terrible."

"Be damn glad when we run through, sir."

"Humph."

He was on the bridge. He stood there, afraid to look to the east. He noticed the helmsman intent at the wheel, the lookout on both wings, and quartermaster Smith checking the charts. His first mate's face startled him... such a youthful face... not realizing the danger of the moment.

"Little nasty, Cap'n," Mr. Stephenson said, "but the fog is breaking slowly."

"Too slow, Mr. Stephenson," said Brill in a tone weaker than usual. "I'll take over, Stephenson." He wondered if his voice had betrayed him.

Stephenson began reciting the routine data: course, speed, drift, messages. The boy's voice was respectful and obedient. He mentioned that Lieutenant O'Donnell, the executive officer, had just turned in.

"No bearings?" Brill cried sharply.

"Not since 0145, sir. Mr. Bachman had a star sight and gave a bearing from her. We were right on it, Cap'n!"

Speed twelve knots; course 036 degrees true. The fog was breaking, but it was still too thick for bearings. The off-shore wind, the seaward drift...no danger. They would clear the Point by seven miles...standard course, and they were right on it...four hours ago!

"You can turn in, Stephenson."

"Aye, aye, sir. Thank you, sir."

Quartermaster Smith was very talkative. Brill listened abstractedly. He looked at the chart and the night order book. He moved to the starboard wing and peered out at the sea. Daylight was seeping through patches of the fog. Visibility less than half a mile. Dirty weather. Just the sort of weather...!

What was that sound? Breakers? He half turned, then conquered his panic. He tried not to look east, just to keep his eyes straight ahead. But an irresistible force, born of long years of secret dread, forced his head around. The choppy motion of the ship made him sway a little. Huge rolling banks of the ocean's swell broke occasionally, and his eager, straining eyes could see low rollers.

"We're off the Point, sir!"

He tried to answer but could not. The salty winds through the open bridge strained his eyes. He blinked.

What was that out there? The fog banks had parted. A ship! A ship! It was a ship...wait! Weren't there more ships...one, two, three...four on the rocks?

"Ships off the starboard bow!" He heard his voice, loud and false.

They were there! The dead ships...dead men, his old friends! Their cries echoed in his ears!

"Ship, sir?" A lookout spoke. "Where, sir?"

Quartermaster Smith ran over.

"I don't see a ship, sir."

Captain Brill straightened up. It was now or never. He would prove it to himself. He would kill his fears.

"Right ten degrees rudder," he ordered.

"Right ten degrees rudder, sir," the helmsman repeated.

The *Atkinson* heeled over slightly as she responded. Lookouts and quartermaster peered into the fog. They said nothing and looked questioningly at Brill.

"Slow speed to eight knots," Brill said.

"Slow speed to eight knots," the order echoed.

He watched the destroyer's sharp bow point steadily at



the spot where...

"It *is* a ship, sir."

"Small yacht in distress, sir. There goes a rocket."

Brill spoke again. "Stop engines. Lifeboats rear of the watch stand by!"

At the Officers' Club, a friend congratulated Captain Brill.

"It's the Navy Cross for you, Tom, and damn well deserved. But tell me, how did you happen to sight the yacht when no one else could?"

"It was the nightmare," Brill slowly replied. "It was the nightmare."





## Pitter Patter

Willard E. Crimmins

("The pitter-patter of little feet." I suppose all "newly-weds" include such thoughts in their dreams. We were no exception.)

The house is quiet when I return from work, and my thoughts of a moment's rest, along with the relaxation of a few pages of *My Antonia*, lead me to the sofa.

Muscles, tensed by the day's work, unbend, and my mind starts to absorb the novel by Willa Cather when all is disturbed by the pitter-patter of little feet. Pitter-patter! I try hard to appreciate the sentiment intended by the creator of those immortal words. The only connection I can make between the saying and my immediate thoughts is the sickening feeling in the pit of my stomach when I hear the patter of six little feet pounding down the stairs. Their naps (poor innocent babes consider them chores) are over and their energy is concentrated and ready to burst like a "Bikini blast."

There is one hope of salvation; they may not notice me and tear on through the house and into the yard. I close my eyes, hold my breath, and wait. My hopes are shattered when the heel of a shoe presses down hard on my head and I am engulfed by an army of arms, legs, and questions.

## Sunday School

Willard E. Crimmins

(We can not attend church as a family group. Our children are too young. We do, however, see that our boys go to Sunday School regularly.)

I have always looked forward to Sunday as a day of rest and relaxation. Lately I have changed my dreams of this wonderful day, because it adds to the week a few more hours of work. I have three little boys to bathe, dress and take to Sunday School, while Mother prepares dinner.

Three little boys in a bathroom can make a terrible mess. It is difficult to explain to one child that I can not safely handle more than two in the tub. A child's mind thinks only of the present, so the idea of, "It's your turn next week," doesn't work. I am sure of at least one boy crying continuously.

I do (I don't know how) eventually get them dressed and ready to go. The next battle looms as we get into the car. They all want to get in the front seat. I suppose this could be managed if there were some way of nailing the door on their side and erecting a barrier between them and me. The argument is momentarily stopped when two of their little friends arrive and ask for a ride to church. Now they all fight to get in the back seat. They win; I ride alone in the front.

The short trip to church is uneventful but noisy. I don't know what they do to make such a racket; I'm afraid to look.

As we enter the church school, a strange change takes place. The children very meekly greet their teacher with a polite "Good morning," and quietly take their places. Why they change so completely, I'll never know. When I leave, I remember the picture they made with their heads bowed reverently, while the teacher offered a child's prayer, and I feel that the ordeal of getting them ready every Sunday is worthwhile.



# The Duck Who Wanted To Swim The Ocean

Dale Warmouth

Once there was a young duck whose greatest ambition it was to swim all the way across the ocean. But the ducks who knew better had never heard of such a thing. They sneered whenever he brought up the subject. They scoffed and pooh-poohed him with zeal.

Being youthful, even when one is a duck, is a great asset, and so willy-nilly, the duck held firmly to his dream. Month after month, he practiced earnestly. He would go out in secret while the others still had their bills tucked under their wings, and he swam and swam until his legs were as hard as iron. His lungs became powerful from all the wind sprints he took, and he even developed a secret stroke.

One day, however, a kindly elder among his flock took him aside and said, "My child, you do not know what you are thinking. In order to fulfill your dreams, you would have to swim out of the pond, down the brook, down the river to another river, down that river to the bay, and over the bay before you even get to the ocean. Once on the ocean you would be at the mercy of hit-and-run steamships, Portuguese men-of-war, flotsam, jetsam, rip tides, williwaws and sharks."

The damage was done. The young duck's ambitions faded. He fired his press agent. He began to train down. His ears were opened at last to the derision about him. He heard the others laughing behind his back and calling him "that young fool who thinks that he can swim the ocean." The young ducklings were throwing stones at him.

Flaming youth finally died down to a mere sizzle in the duck's heart. Eventually, he thought that diving to the bottom of the pond and squatting there for thirty seconds was pretty darn daring. He was one of the gang then, and he began to court a pretty young Muscovy duck. In fact, he was so much like the other fellows that he was tempted sometimes to scoff at an up-and-coming drake whose ambition it was to swim down to the bay and back.

One cool day he paddled languidly about the pond, dreaming of his little Muscovy and her charms and the possibility of a cozy little nest for two. He fell to rhapsodizing, and



before he knew it, he had swum out of the pond, down the brook, down the river to another river, down that river to the bay, over the bay right out into the ocean. Time passed, and he escaped the hazards of hit-and-run steamships, Portuguese men-of-war, flotsam, jetsam, rip tides, williwaws and sharks.

Suddenly he looked up from his rhapsodizings and he saw that shore was far off. He saw a flock of ducks and made for them. As he approached, he realized that they were not his ethnic group, but strangers. They were quacking in a nasal accent, and he soon realized that they were French ducks.

"Well, what do you know?" he said to himself, kicking the top off a whitecap with joy. "Here I've swum out of the pond, down the brook, down the river to another river, down that river to the bay, over the bay and clean across the ocean!"

He scudded rapidly for shore, quacking dizzily, "I have escaped all the hit-and-run steamships, Portuguese men-of-war, flotsam, jetsam, rip tides, williwaws and sharks!"

He followed the French ducks up to a Norman farmyard where the farmer fell to feeding his poultry. And so with his heart full of rejoicing, the adventurous duck joined in and gobbled corn with gusto.

"I have succeeded," he queeled between gobbles. "I am a hero!"

He knew it for sure when the farmer came around and gathered up the finest of the flock and put them in a crate. He put the triumphant duck in the crate too. He put the crate on a cart, a horse to the cart, said "Heu, heu," which is French for giddap, and they clattered down the road.

"Where are we going?" the proud duck asked another.

"We are going to Paris," his companion replied.

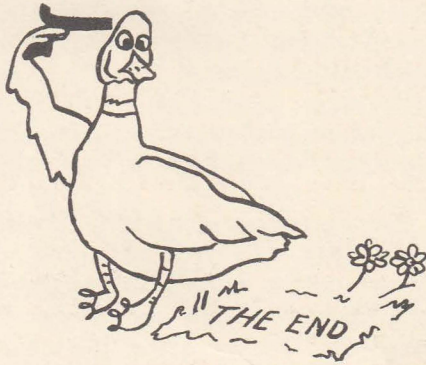
The duck's heart leapt with joy. He was going to Paris, an achievement beyond even his dreams. Monsieur le Maire would give him keys to the city! He would pass beneath the Arc de Triomphe amid the huzzahs of many! The pretty French girls would leap from the sidewalks to kiss him soundly on both cheeks! He felt a hot flush of pride and turned his head modestly that his companion might not note him.

The cart rattled on, and the ducks napped, and the ducks quacked, and the horse switched flies, and the farmer napp-

ed on his seat, and the ducks quarreled and told spicy stories, and the farmer took pulls of cognac from his flask, and the horse plodded on, until they reached Paris.

"How exciting! How colorful!" the duck chortled, filling his lungs deeply with the maddening Parisian atmosphere.

And the farmer sold the duck in the market to a civil functionary with large mustaches and a red face. And the civil functionary and his buxom wife and their nine children ate the duck for Sunday dinner, which certainly put an end to his holiday spirits.





## Will's Way

Richard Ridge

Flyers are an inarticulate lot; they make good fishing companions. John Wainwright, an old and trusted friend of mine, was typical of his breed.

We sat, lost in our own thoughts, on the bank of a rushing stream in Scotland's Trossachs. A dragonfly hovered over the sparkling water; I picked up a smooth round pebble and shied it at him.

"Burn shot," said John.

I tried again.

"Not enough deflection," suggested the critic.

We resumed our silent inactivity.

A speckled trout had been trying, for ten minutes, to leap the falls; in one final flashing arc, he triumphantly wiggled his tail and disappeared into the upper waters.

"Where there's a will there is a way," I said.

"Uh uh," said John. He stared absently into space for a while, knocked out the dottle from his pipe, and muttered, "Yes sir, he was quite a card."

"Who was?"

"My old skipper on Eighteen Squadron, Willy Williams. 'Will' we called him; 'where there's Will there's a way', he used to say."

I sensed a story coming, so I settled back on the grassy bank while John got his pipe back into service.

"I joined the squadron on the fifth of November, in '43. Gibson was the C. O. at the time--you know, the boy that did that dam-busting job. He gave me the usual pep-talk and assigned me to *O for Orange* as co-pilot to Flight-Lieutenant William Williams, D. F. C., R. A. F. (Volunteer Reserve).

"I found 'Will' hiding behind a mug of beer, in the Officers' Mess. He was about five-foot-two in his flying boots, had coal-black hair, green eyes--one of those fiery Welsh types.

"Will had a way with him. On joining his crew, a new member was told, 'Now look you, man, I have a way of doing things and the Air Force has another, so learn mine and forget the other.' Then he would detail instructions and spend hours of practice with the fledgling to establish Will's Way.



"Even Rupert Brooke had to bow down, for often in the calm of straight and level flight we heard,

'If I should die, think only this of me:

That there's some corner of foreign field

That is forever *Wales* . . . .'

"During the Berlin blitz we carried one of those 12,000 pound block-busters in our bomb-bay. And one night, as we were making a delivery, I listened idly to the interchange of instructions for the target approach:

'Altimeter fifteen angels.'

'Wilco fifteen angels'

'Airspeed two zero zero.'

'Wilco two zero zero.'

"And after a period of pregnant silence, 'Left, left--steady, stead--st-ea-dy. . . .'

"Every member of the crew instinctively held his breath, and tensed himself for the resultant lift of the aircraft when it was released from the bomb's weight. Then, car-r-rumff! An entirely unwelcome factor entered into our well-laid schemes; an anti-aircraft shell exploded under our star-board wing. I looked into the gates of Hell; I felt its hot breath on my face. I was upside down, hanging from my shoulder straps. I was right-side up again, my thighs crushing into the seat. I was face forward, being tossed from side to side. We were in a spin. Instinctively, I looked down at the turn and bank indicator and saw the needle pointing a maximum turn to the left; the ball registered a skid in the opposite direction. *This was it.* I was scared stiff.

"As I stared at the face of Death, I became aware of someone praying, 'Oh my God I am. . . .'

"That was Paddy Green, the mid-upper gunner.

"I yelled, 'Abandon aircraft, 'knowing the impossibility as I said it.

"A sharp authoritative voice took command, 'Captain to crew--I have control. Captain to co-pilot--throttle off star-board engines --full throttle port engines--bomb doors closed.'

"As we fought and prayed our way down that spiral stair-case, I told myself that it was crazy to try to pull a Lancaster out of a spin. But we did, or rather, Will did. And what's more, we went back and dropped the bomb; that was Will's Way."

John sighed deeply; I sensed his relief at the airing of

his ordeal.

"Ever hear from him?" I said.

"He's dead," said John, "dead as a door-nail."

There was a slight catch in his voice. "Died on the way home from that trip. The blighter had a hunk of shrapnel in his guts."





## Propinquity

Wendell Clark

I stood on a hill and touched a star;  
(How warm to my hand it was, how high!).  
It slipped from my grasp and sped afar  
and left my arm sunk in empty sky.  
(How near to my hand it was, how high!).

I knelt by a stream and touched a star;  
( How warm to my hand it was, how near!).  
It dripped from my hand, a sparkling fire,  
And left my hand deep in night and fear.  
(How hot to my hand it was, how near!).

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# All in Vain

Dick Bush

It was the night of the big, indoor track meet which was held annually at Madison Square Garden. The best of track and field men would be there competing for honors. The contest was scheduled to start at 8:00 p. m. but already at 7:00 p. m. the arena was filled with eager spectators.

James Carlton was the main attraction. He was a champion pole vaulter. True, he was past his prime since today was his thirty-fourth birthday, but still he was favored to win his event. Jim was an honest, handsome man. His frame of better than six feet was packed with solid muscles. He was more than a mere entry; he was a tradition in this track meet since he had competed in all of the previous ones. The fans loved him. They had followed him since he first entered athletics when a young man of seventeen, and they had seen him gain glory for his miraculous feats. His perfect coordination, his never tiring body, his will to win, all made him the greatest athlete alive.

Unknown to the loyal fans or the other competitors, Jim had looked forward to tonight's games. He knew too well that tonight's track meet would be his last. He had trained hard for the meet. He had decided to make his exit from the sport world a memorable one, for tonight he intended to break the world's pole vault record of fifteen feet and three inches. Jim realized that he would have to use every ounce of strength in his body to accomplish this task. That was the reason for his diligent training.

Finally, at 8:00 p. m., the announcer blared over the amplifying system, "Our National Anthem."

The crowd rose from their seats while the organist played. After the crowd had settled again the mayor officially opened the track meet with a short address.

The first event was the hundred yard dash. Jim began to limber up, exercising for a while, and then made a few practice jumps. Meanwhile two judges had come over to the pit, inspected the apparatus, and set the crossbar at ten feet. The other three participants were much younger than Jim. He didn't worry about winning his event, but rather about breaking the record. His main ambition in life was to hold



a world's record.

All four men cleared the crossbar on their first turn. Tension mounted as the crossbar slowly climbed. At thirteen feet the first man failed to clear the bar. Six inches later the second man faltered.

A silence fell upon the arena as the two remaining participants neared the fifteen-foot mark. It was a spectacle to see Jim sail through the air and over the crossbar. He acted more like a machine than a human being.

Finally, at fifteen feet and two inches, Jim subdued the remaining contestant. A cheer arose but it was broken abruptly by the announcer. "James Carlton will attempt to break the world's record. The crossbar now rests at fifteen feet and four inches."

This was it. Jim was nervous, but he was sure of himself. The silence was awesome as he stood at the distant end of the runway. Twenty yards in front of him on the other side of that crossbar lay the answer to his prayers.

He gripped the pole and started down the path. The pole dipped and then slipped into the trough. Jim pushed with his feet and soared into the air. Every muscle strained as he neared the top. He arched his body in order to clear the bar, but his foot nicked it and a groan arose from the crowd as the crossbar fell to the turf.

The judges placed the bar in position and measured the distance from the middle of the bar to the ground. The second time Jim crashed into the bar and fell with it to the sawdust-filled pit.

Jim had one more chance. Everyone was silent. The ticking of thousands of watches could be heard throughout the vast arena. Could he do it?

Jim said a short prayer while he was standing at the distant end of the runway. He gripped the pole and sprinted down the path. The pole slipped into the trough and in a flash Jim was in the air. At the top he desperately strained his muscles in order to arch his back.

A great cheer arose from the crowd as Jim fell into the pit. He had broken the world's record. He thanked God and tried to get up, but he was too weak. He had exhausted his strength.

The fans were still wildly cheering as the judges checked the measurements. Then, as if lightning had struck, the announcer bellowed, "Due to a faulty measurement..."

## Wonders of The Wirephoto

Chuck Gloman

The din of clattering typewriters, teletype and linotype machines stopped abruptly as the door of the darkroom swung shut. Phil Sarno, head photographer at *The Plain Speaker*, daily afternoon newspaper of Hazleton, said, "Now, of course the first thing you do is click off the regular light."

He snapped a nearby switch and the small room was enclosed in darkness. Then he pulled a tiny golden chain and a yellow filter lamp cast a dim glow across the room.

"That's the only light you can have on when you take pictures over the wirephoto," he said. "Otherwise the sensitive emulsion on the 8 x 10 photo paper will be ruined. I'll turn on the machine so you can see how it works."

One twist of a knob and the wirephoto machine began to hum, while a small red light on the extreme left indicated that it was ready for use. Suddenly a shrill sound emerged from a wire-covered loudspeaker about three inches in diameter, on the upper right of the machine.

"Good," he murmured, half to himself. "One's coming over now."

A deep voice came from the loudspeaker: "Here's a good quality print for all points ready to receive; it's WX15, a clear 8 x 10 picture out of Washington showing. . . ."

As the voice described the picture about to be transmitted, the photographer reached into a cabinet just a few feet from the machine and removed an 8 x 10 sheet of sensitized photographic paper. He lifted the top of the machine's front compartment, revealing an eight-inch steel cylinder through which extended a thin axle. Raising a small, black metal bar he slid the sheet under and wrapped it once around the cylindrical disc, then set the bar down on the paper, holding it firmly in place.

"Here's your preliminary. . . ." the loudspeaker was saying.

Another shrill sound pierced the room.

"Now," said the photographer, "you start the disc revolving with this button."

He pushed the first of three control buttons at the left



of the machine and with a soft hum the disc around which the paper was wrapped began to revolve.

"Here's your final from Washington. . . ." the voice blared and then briefly described the picture again.

Another shrill sound came from the loudspeaker and as the photographer pushed the second control button the disc stopped for a few seconds, then clicked on again, while the shrill faded into a soft, rhythmic beat.

Sarno pointed to an almost unnoticeable light beam that was flashing as the disc turned. "This ray," he said, "is getting impulses from the transmitting set at Washington and flashing them on to the paper."

"How long does the whole operation take?" I asked.

"Just eight minutes," he replied, and then went on. "You know, only ten newspapers in the state have a machine like this. The others have to use mats the A. P. sends out later in the day."

Soon the rhythmic beat from the speaker became weaker, finally dying out.

"Well, that's it," the photographer said. "In just eight minutes we can get a picture from any point in the United States. Kinda makes you stop and think, doesn't it? Here we are -- getting slammed all the time about what a destructive bunch we are -- how our inventions are killing people and making a total wreck out of the world, but yet we've got little things that people seem to forget about -- a small gadget that lets everybody on one side of the country know and even SEE what happened on the other side in just a matter of minutes."

## Mr. Peeble and The Ghost

Carlie Jane Thomas

Mr. Peeble awoke to find the room still dark, and the unreality that comes with waking in a strange room was with him. He had slept soundly, for he was in his own bed, and as his eyes accustomed themselves to the faint light, familiar articles of furniture impressed themselves. The room was different, of course, but after locating the windows he orientated himself, and now his mind sought the reason for his sudden awakening. It had almost seemed that someone spoke. He raised himself slightly and looked at the bottom of the bed.

There it was. A figure yet not a figure; a sort of pale luminosity without substance, that seemed to be sitting on the bed, wavering ever so slightly as if its lack of mass made the act of sitting a triumph over gravity. I'll close my eyes, he thought, and it will go away. When he opened them it was still there. I'm dreaming, he decided. Very well, he would speak, even if in a dream.

"Hello."

"Oh! I *thought* you were awake," the figure replied in a voice strangely thin and without body.

Mr. Peeble sighed. So it *was* true. Not for a minute had he believed the stories told by the real estate agent.

"You're the ghost, I suppose," he managed timidly. He sat upright and squinted hard at the bottom of the bed.

"I am, although I detest that term," said the spectre with what looked like a shudder. Mr. Peeble mentally noted that it was usually people who shuddered in the presence of a ghost.

"Well, then... apparition," replied Mr. Peeble.

"That's a little better. Aren't you frightened?"

"I'm not sure. I guess not. Maybe I'm dreaming and you're not really there at all."

"Oh, I'm here, and you're not dreaming. Not afraid either, I guess. Most people are. It may be a problem getting rid of you."

"You're not getting rid of me," replied Mr. Peeble, his courage returning. "I've leased this house and I intend to



stay here."

"Didn't the agent tell you about us?"

"Yes, he did, but since my company transferred me here, and I had to have a home, I took this place. I don't suppose you know about the housing shortage." Mr. Peeble was faintly sarcastic.

"Dear me, yes," replied his spectral visitor. "I'm acutely aware of the problem. Well, lease or not, we were here first. I'm afraid you'll have to go."

"Why, that's ridiculous," said Mr. Peeble heatedly. "In all my fifty years I have never heard such a preposterous... Did I understand you to say 'we'? You mean there are... that you're not the only one who haunts here?"

"Oh my, yes; there are five or six of us." Mr. Peeble groaned. The apparition floated over and sat on the side of the bed. Mr. Peeble drew back instinctively but spoke up firmly.

"No matter how many you are, you'll have to go." Now that his nocturnal visitor had moved nearer, he made a closer study of it. He could not make out anything resembling a face. What might be termed arms were so formless that, when moved, they were a mere separation of the main ethereal mass. It's just like a blob of fog, he thought, except that it speaks.

"Are you a man-apparition?" he asked curiously.

"You could call me that," said the spectre chuckling. "Or you could say I *was* a man."

"Your friends, too? And where are they? Why don't I see them?"

"Oh, the boys are downstairs... or upstairs... or someplace. You couldn't see them anyhow, unless they wished it. It depends on our whim. I can be invisible or not, as I choose. See?" And at the words the figure vanished. "But I'm still here."

Mr. Peeble jumped, for the words were whispered in his ear. "Well, come back where I can see you," he replied testily. The whitish figure re-appeared on the side of the bed.

"Startled you, didn't I? But I must say, you're all right. I'm beginning to form a fondness for you."

Mr. Peeble shivered. "Let's get back to the subject. Are you vacating the premises or not?"

"Well, as I said before, we have been here for a long

time. You're the interloper. It's all very well to talk of housing shortages in *your* world. We have them in *ours* too. You people haven't been building enough new houses, and you're fixing up more and more of the old ones, and now you're crowding *us* out."

"I have a lease..." began Mr. Peeble firmly.

"Time was when there were a lot of old houses around. It's got so now that you have to hunt for an old house that's fit to haunt. Oh, there are some old shacks in the country, but I'm an urban dweller, I guess. Like to be where there's a little life." The spectre chuckled and Mr. Peeble winced at his macabre touch. "So you see, we have housing problems too. You don't suppose for a minute that so many of us would share this one house if there were enough to go around?" The spectre fluttered as though seeking a more comfortable position. "Tell me something about yourself. Are you married?"

"There is a Mrs. Peeble."

"Does she know about the conditions here?"

"I didn't tell her," replied Mr. Peeble uncomfortably. "I persuaded her to stop off and visit her mother until the rest of the furniture comes. I thought it would give me a chance to sleep here a few nights and convince myself that there were no other... ah... occupants."

"And now you'll have to tell her."

"Look," said Mr. Peeble desperately, "you'll simply have to go before my wife gets here. Go find a new house to haunt."

"Poof!" said the apparition. "A new house wouldn't do for us at all. No background...no tradition..." From downstairs came a loud crash.

"What was that?" asked Mr. Peeble, startled. "It sounded like glass breaking."

"One of the more buoyant spirits having some fun," it said. "I'm sorry to say he knocked over that fancy old oil lamp and broke the top shade."

Mr. Peeble laughed. "I always hated that thing. One of Mrs. Peeble's antiques."

"I told the boys that you're quite a regular fellow," said the spectre. "They're coming up to see you in a minute."

Mr. Peeble yawned. "I'm very tired, and I know we haven't settled our problem, but I don't think I can stay awake much longer." He closed his eyes and was almost



asleep when he heard his visitor say, "Here they are. We'll go now and I'll talk to you tomorrow night."

Mr. Peeble opened his eyes. At the foot of the bed six wavering shapes were lined up in soldier-like precision. Although there were no faces, he knew they were solemnly inspecting him. He laughed quietly to himself.

"You look," he said sleepily, "like the weekly wash hanging on the line."

Mr. Peeble's work suffered next day. His mind was on the problem of how to evict a band of ghosts who evidently were determined to make his new home uninhabitable. The problem of Mrs. Peeble arose too. How could he explain the situation to her? Finally he composed a telegram advising his wife to check in at the Bond Hotel the following day using as an excuse that the house was not ready to live in.

The day finally dragged to its close, and after a meal hardly touched, Mr. Peeble started for home. He was not without misgivings, but the house was silent when he entered, and he soon busied himself with unpacking boxes and arranging the contents as best he could. He was presently surprised to note that it was ten o'clock. Nothing had occurred to indicate the other "occupants" were about. He was weary and decided to retire.

He had just climbed into bed when a now-familiar voice said, "Good evening, Mr. Peeble. Since you are retiring early, I thought we would continue our talk now so that you will not lose any sleep later."

"You're very kind," said Mr. Peeble with faint sarcasm. Peering about, he located his spectral visitor on the left side of the bed.

"Since we must talk, what's your name? I can't just call you 'apparition'."

"I don't wish to give my name," replied the spirit. "It might lead to complications."

"Then I shall call you 'Appy'." said Mr. Peeble. "Short for 'apparition'. Have you come to tell me you are leaving the place?"

"Oh no," said Appy. "I thought you might have come to that decision yourself, although I enjoy our little talks so much I'd hate to see you go."

Mr. Peeble sighed and was silent.

"When is Mrs. Peeble arriving?" continued the spectre.

"Tomorrow."

"Well, perhaps we shall all get along very nicely. Yes, that may be the ideal solution; we'll all live like one happy family."

Mr. Peeble shuddered at the thought.

Appy bounced off the bed. "We won't bother you. Pleasant dreams!" and he was gone.

The following day found Mr. Peeble no nearer a solution of his problem. Late in the afternoon he talked briefly with his wife when she checked into the Hotel, made arrangements to have dinner with her, and hung up before she could ask too many questions. At the end of the day he made a hurried trip home to change clothes.

He bathed and shaved, went back to his bedroom, and found a ghostly shape squatting in the center of the bed.

"Is that you, Appy? You all look alike, you know."

"Ah, yes, I suppose we do."

"I do recognize your voice," said Mr. Peeble. "Sorry I can't talk. I'm meeting Mrs. Peeble at the Hotel. She arrived today."

"Yes, I know," said the apparition. "She was here."

"What? Dear me," said Mr. Peeble. "I hope nothing untoward occurred."

"Spare yourself," replied Appy, waving a ghostly hand. "We were most decorous. Although Elmer, one of my friends, took exception to the way she rooted around in the attic, and forgot himself for a moment. She was merely making an inspection of the place and he shouldn't have..."

"What happened?"

"Well, nothing much. You see, in the daytime we like to relax... restup... sit quietly and meditate. We just can't stand a lot of noise. Mrs. Peeble was banging things around so much that Elmer... well... he pinched her."

"Where?" demanded Mr. Peeble.

"Oh, in the... ah... most accessible place. She gave a little yelp, but she evidently thought it was her girdle for she gave a little twitch to..."

"Never mind!"

"Well, I restrained him, and that was all. Oh yes, she saw the broken lamp."

Mr. Peeble was dismayed. "Look, Appy, you can see how impossible it is for you and your friends to get along with Mrs. Peeble and me. Why don't you promise to leave?"



I'll make up a story about the lamp... tell her I knocked it over."

"It can't be done. I think we'll get along very well. In fact I think I'll go along to the Hotel with you and meet Mrs. Peeble again and get better acquainted. She seems very nice."

"You...you...can't. No...I forbid it. You can't." Mr. Peeble was horror-stricken.

"Come, come, Mr. Peeble. I shall be very discreet. I'd love to go to a hotel and watch the people enjoy themselves. I shan't be any trouble."

"But people will see you!"

"Oh, no. I shall be visible only to you. It's perfectly safe." Mr. Peeble sat down weakly. "But they'll hear me if I say something to you."

"You will have to be careful about that. If you prefer, I shall be totally invisible."

"No, no! If you must come, I prefer to see what you are doing."

"It will be a real pleasure for me," said Appy, "and I shall be eternally grateful..."

At the hotel they entered an elevator and were whisked aloft. Presently they alighted and walked down the hall. As he knocked at the door Mr. Peeble said, "You'd better stay out here. Mrs. Peeble may not be dressed."

"Pshaw, she won't see me. Besides," he added slyly, "I'm only a spirit."

Further talk was cut off by the opening of the door. Mrs. Peeble stood there.

"Edward." She embraced Mr. Peeble, and Appy scooted into the room. While they talked he pried inquisitively about the room. He sat on the bed, looked out the window, inspected the clothes closet, and in general annoyed Mr. Peeble so that he hustled his wife outside and down into the dining room, not, however, without his ghostly companion. When they were seated, Appy hovered at Mr. Peeble's shoulder. While they talked and the dinner was being served, Appy critically inspected each dish. Mr. Peeble did not enjoy the meal. Presently, his wife asked the question he had dreaded.

"Dear, why isn't the house ready? I went out there today and it looked all right to me. Of course, things are not exactly in their proper places...and what happened to

my lamp?"

To Mr. Peeble's intense relief, Appy seized this moment to swirl away on an exploration of the cocktail bar.

"Clara, I'm going to tell you the queerest tale you ever heard." And he told her the entire story, omitting only the fact that his spectral friend was in the immediate vicinity. Mrs. Peeble was dumfounded.

"Edward, are you sure? Of course, you've never lied. . . I would never believe such a story from anyone else. What can we do?"

"I don't know," he said dejectedly. "They appear perfectly harmless but obviously we can't live under such conditions." Idly, he questioned her about her trip and inquired about her mother.

"Mother's fine. I had a hard time talking her out of coming along. You know how she wants to be a party to everything."

"Yes, I know." A gleam appeared in Mr. Peeble's eye. "Perhaps that's the answer!" he exulted. "Look, dear, can you call your mother and ask her to come? Remember today when you were in the attic creating what Appy called a disturbance? He told me later how they liked peace and quiet in the daytime. . ."

Mrs. Peeble bristled. "You're not implying that my mother. . ."

"No, no. Listen. Your mother is a remarkable woman. I've said many times that she's not afraid of man nor beast. She won't be afraid of these spectres either, but from what I've seen and heard, she might have an effect on them!" His wife was dubious and inclined to be resentful, but finally agreed to the idea.

"I'll call her now, and she'll probably be here in the morning."

"Fine. Now say no more." He was afraid Appy might be present though not visible. Soon he caught sight of his spectral friend returning.

"I was in the bar with the rest of the spirits," Appy told him with a giggle.

"Very funny," Mr. Peeble said tartly.

"What did you say?" inquired his wife.

"Er--nothing. Thinking out loud, I guess." He was still reluctant to disclose that he had brought Appy with him. Still, he had better get him out of the way. Soon he made his



departure, assuring Mrs. Peeble he would make one more attempt to persuade the spectres to leave.

"It won't do you any good," said Appy as they crossed the lobby. I think your wife is very charming, and I'm sure now that she will not be a disturbing influence to me or my friends."

Mr. Peeble made his plea. "Now see here, Appy, can't you be reasonable and find another place? Mrs. Peeble and I can't have any privacy with you and your friends around. I like you, but it's just an impossible situation with spirits and humans in the same house."

His spirit friend replied, "You're fretting too much. I'm sure everything will work out very nicely. And I *could* be quite helpful to you at times."

"But," said Mr. Peeble, "if it weren't for this whole ridiculous situation I wouldn't have my wife staying at a hotel; we would be very happy; I wouldn't need any help from anybody. Appy! are you listening?" Appy was gone.

Mr. Peeble was pleased to receive a telephone call from his wife the next morning. "Mother's arrived," she said, "And I've explained everything to her. Hurry home tonight." Mr. Peeble made a fervent wish that his plan would succeed.

Mrs. Peeble met him at the door that night. He winced at the blast of music that came from the interior. "Mother's cooperating beautifully," said his wife. "Once or twice we, we saw those... vague shapes you mentioned, but Mother carried on so they soon vanished. She's in the kitchen now."

Mr. Peeble accompanied his wife to the kitchen where he greeted his mother-in-law. She wasted no time in informing him that she considered his vacillation responsible for the present condition.

Living with Mrs. Swagger was not a mild experience, as Mr. Peeble had discovered in the past. She dominated a room or a house by her very presence. She was aggressive, physically and mentally. She could perform a simple feat like wiping the dust from a table top and leave you with the feeling that it wouldn't dare be caught there again. Any problem she faced was not attacked; it was overwhelmed. Also, she was a radio fan in its fullest sense. Her waking hours were a succession of soap serials, give-away programs, and ball games interspersed with swing music, all at a volume level that she considered adequate, meaning it could be heard in every room of the house.



After a tasty meal, Mrs. Swagger announced she would do the dishes, and this statement being tantamount to a decree, Mr. and Mrs. Peeble retired to the living room.

"I do hope," said Mrs. Peeble, "That all this is having the desired effect on our ghostly intruders. And soon!"

The Peebles were in bed and almost asleep before a wraith-like figure appeared on Mr. Peeble's side of the bed.

"Is that you, Appy?"

"Yes," the words were almost a sob. "Mr. Peeble, what made you bring this. . . this. . . other woman into our house? And why didn't you warn me?"

"What is he saying?" inquired Mrs. Peeble surveying the figure apprehensively.

"I'll tell you later," promised Mr. Peeble. "You know how mothers-in-law are," he said to Appy. "How could I forbid her coming?"

"It's a dirty trick," wailed Appy. "My friends are frantic. She made our lives unbearable today. She was all over the house; radio going all the time; serials, swing music-- and her singing!"

Mr. Peeble grinned to himself.

"She went through the attic like a cyclone. She brought her radio with her. I'm afraid this is the end," he continued bitterly. "We can't stay while she remains. She has a peculiar effect on us."

"I know what you mean, believe me," said Mr. Peeble. "But you didn't *have* to listen to all that radio noise."

"No, but there's no fun in being a deaf ghost," mourned Appy. "And if we stay 'tuned in' we hear what we heard today. Will she be here very long?"

"Who knows!"

The apparition was silent for a long time. "You win," he said finally. "We just can't put up with her. I've enjoyed our own contact very much, and I regret that you had to use such extreme measures to get rid of us. We'll go."

Mr. Peeble felt a trifle guilty. "Where?"

"We've located a place today. The man who lives there has a lot on his conscience and he won't be hard to get rid of. It won't be as nice as here, though," he said sadly.

"Why don't you tell Mrs. Swagger you're leaving?" suggested Mr. Peeble.

"Yes, I suppose that's the thing to do. Surrender my sword, as it were. I shall return." He drifted through the



doorway. Mr. Peeble joyfully acquainted his wife with the developments.

From the next room came the vibrant voice of Mrs. Swagger. "Get out of my room, you miserable hunk of ectoplasm!" Then followed several minutes of silence broken occasionally by the now softer murmur of Mrs. Swagger.

Appy returned presently and spoke sorrowfully. "Well, that's that. I told her we were leaving. I don't think I was successful in convincing her that we were going for good. Maybe I didn't try too hard," he finished almost maliciously.

"What do you mean?" Mr. Peeble was faintly alarmed.

"She's going to stay here a month or two to be sure we don't return."

Mr. Peeble was dismayed. "That's a dirty trick!" he said accusingly.

"Perhaps," said Appy. "Goodbye, and perhaps we shall meet again."

"I hope not," said Mr. Peeble fervently. Appy vanished. Mr. Peeble dolefully told his wife of this latest turn of events. She was silent awhile.

"Well," said Mrs. Peeble, "So long as they go. Dear, Mother may stay a bit longer than we expected, and I know she can be a trial, but she did get rid of those horrible spirits, anyway."

"A Pyrrhic victory," murmured Mr. Peeble.

"What's that?"

"Nothing."

"Well, aren't you glad? How do you feel?"

"My feelings can be summarized very briefly," said Mr. Peeble sighing. "I'm dispirited!"



