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The Ladder ***a Lesbian Review***



SEPTEMBER, 1967



purpose of the

Daughters of **BILITIS**

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING
THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

- ① Education of the Lesbian, enabling her to understand herself and to make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic, and economic implications - by establishing and maintaining a library of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public meetings on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by providing the Lesbian a forum for the interchange of ideas within her own group.
- ② Education of the public, developing an understanding and acceptance of the Lesbian as an individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices - by public discussion meetings and by dissemination of educational literature on the Lesbian theme.
- ③ Encouragement of and participation in responsible research dealing with homosexuality.
- ④ Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposing and promoting changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group through due process of law in the state legislatures.

Published monthly by the Daughters
of Bilitis, Inc., a non-profit corpora-
tion, 3470 Mission Street, San Fran-
cisco, California 94110.

THE LADDER

VOLUME XI, NUMBER XI

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The Causes and Cures of Heterosexuality

Rita Laporte

(excerpts from a recent symposium held at State University)

Present were a number of psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, psychologists, psychotherapists, and social psychologists—in short, psychists. I have taken the liberty of combining and condensing their comments.

Moderator: We will discuss today a most timely subject. Many are alarmed at what seems to them a rapid increase in heterosexuality. No doubt there is an absolute increase, but it has not been established that there is also a percentage increase. The fact that the subject is coming out in the open is misleading. However that may be, no one feels that the condition is decreasing and it is a problem that deeply concerns society.

The papers to be read to us today are all pioneering ones. That heterosexuality is a disease is a very recent concept and one that is violently disputed by many heterosexuals themselves. That the condition has at least some disease aspects can hardly be disputed by thinking people. The population explosion amply attests to this. In the absence of overpopulation in past eras, the insidious aspects of heterosexuality went unnoticed. The Greeks considered it almost as respectable as homosexuality. But as Judeo-Christian morality spread over the Western World, much of heterosexual behavior was thought to be downright criminal. This view is still very much with us as witness the many laws still extant against fornication and adultery. Only with the rise of the science of psychology are some of us coming to realize

that heterosexuality is an illness and is to be treated, not punished.

I shall now turn the meeting over to Dr. Ambrose, an eminent social psychologist, who will give us his ideas as to the nature of this recently recognized disease.

Dr. Ambrose: I would like to say first that psychosis or insanity was with us for millenia, like heterosexuality, before science with its objective and humanitarian spirit tackled the problem as one of illness. We now like to pride ourselves on our kindly and understanding treatment of the mentally ill. Why then have we refused to look at heterosexuality in the same way? Everywhere and at all times it has been at once highly praised and hemmed in by all manner of criminal laws. The heterosexual's own confusion is apparent. Until the present day this widespread infection was masked by high mortality rates. Where one disease takes away the life of many younger people, as for example tuberculosis, another disease of later life gets little chance to manifest itself. As infant, childhood, and young adult mortality are reduced, we are forced to see the devastating effects of uncontrolled heterosexuality.

Another factor in blurring our understanding of heterosexuality as an illness is that it is a social, rather

than an individual, disease. A few million people scattered over the earth may be as heterosexual as they wish with no overall harm done, though even here individual families may suffer. Our present overpopulation problems, however, make the diseased aspect of heterosexuality crystal clear. The wanton production of babies is a cancerous growth threatening to choke our whole planet. As cancerous cells crowd out the healthy in their headlong race to multiply, so will the results of frantic heterosexual coupling destroy all semblance of healthy societies. This parallel is not entirely correct—some breeding is desirable. (I assume we do not go so far as the Shaker or Skopsi sects.)

That the urge to reproduce exists throughout nature makes it seem an unmitigated good. Perhaps it is in creatures below man. And until recently man took a rather lemming-like way out of overbreeding, though he viciously killed others rather than himself. With civilized man cultural evolution has superceded biological evolution. We can no longer count on medical ignorance to save us. (I shall leave aside the solution of the H bomb as unworthy of us.) It is my contention that not only is heterosexuality a social disease in the general sense, but also in the sense that it is a concomitant of our present level of cultural evolution.

Moderator: Thank you, Dr. Ambrose. Our next speaker, one of our foremost psychoanalysts, takes a more classical approach to the nature of the heterosexual syndrome. I give you Dr. Bainbridge.

Dr. Bainbridge: I do not deny that there are social aspects to hetero-

sexuality. In my practice, however, I find heterosexuality to yield to individual treatment much as other serious neuroses do. The cures effected so far are few, but even one cure is a giant step forward. One difficulty is that heterosexuals persist in their aberrant sexual behavior, but are actually proud of their sexual orientation. Observe their antics on any crowded beach. Only when the patient's heterosexuality has caused profound psychological maladjustment is the doctor able to begin meaningful treatment. Too often heterosexuals turn to stopgap measures such as sterilization, mechanical devices, or the now ubiquitous pill. These measures do alleviate the gross symptom (overpopulation) but they cannot get at the root of the problem.

Turning to the etiology of heterosexuality, I find myself embarrassed at the paucity of knowledge in the field. Freud attempted to give an explanation of heterosexual development though, curiously, he did not realize it was a disease process. (But we must remember that the great man was himself a victim of heterosexuality.) The infant male, jealous of his mother's affection for the father, wants to kill the father and marry his mother. Jealousy, then leads to heterosexuality!

Again, fear of the dominating father has been suggested. In a sort of reverse reaction formation, the young boy identifies with the feared father and thus himself becomes heterosexual. Here the neurosis is based on fear. These and like explanations have two grave defects. They do not explain how the infant female becomes heterosexual and secondly, identical childhood conditions can lead to perfectly healthy

homosexuals.

I believe the basic cause to be infantilism. The heterosexual does not really grow up or mature to his potential. We have heard much of the desire to return to the womb. We can go even further in the case of heterosexuals and say that they have an unconscious wish to return to the animal state. An animal's chief accomplishment is reproduction. The rather timid heterosexual, uncertain of his ability to take his place in the world of people (as I shall elaborate shortly) finds breeding gratifying to his ego. And this, oddly enough, in spite of the fact that I can think of no great men or women of the past or present who are looked up to by heterosexuals for their breeding prowess. Remember, however, that we are dealing with unconscious motivations. We see this confusion when heterosexuals point to animals' sexual behavior as proof of the normality of their condition while in other areas they make much of their superiority over the beasts.

To get back to the timidity or fearfulness of heterosexuals. If further proof of their neurotic personality structure were needed, their inordinate fear of the homosexual would suffice. Whereas the healthy homosexual, living among vast numbers of heterosexuals, is quite unconcerned with their effect on him, the poor heterosexual is forever feeling threatened. It most often takes the form of thinking his children (the prized evidence of his only creativity) will be turned into homosexuals by mere association. Would that it were as simple as that!

Moderator: Thank you, Dr. Bainbridge. I would like now to introduce to you our panel member chosen

for what might be called his ultra-liberal approach. Some of you may find his views extreme, but we wish to give all viewpoints a fair hearing. Dr. Critttenham.

Dr. Critttenham: I have always thought that it is wise at least to discuss far out theories in a new field of inquiry. Though seldom is such an extreme theory borne out in its entirety, occasionally an aspect of it is found helpful, if only in freeing the mind from the chains of time-worn concepts. It is in this spirit that I would like to suggest my opinions. Perhaps heterosexuality is not a malady in itself. I mean no offense to Dr. Bainbridge, but of necessity he sees only sick heterosexuals; those well enough to function in society do not seek his help.

I grant you that most heterosexuals are sick, but must we assume that mere heterosexuality is the cause? You will admit that some heterosexuals are far less sick than others. Why should this be? I propose that the condition of heterosexuality is simply the most favourable personality type for the growth of illness caused by one or more as yet unknown factors. I believe Plato has given us a hint in his Symposium:

Aristophanes tells of the myth that originally there were three sexes: man, woman, and the union of the two. The latter sort no longer exists, only the word 'androgynous', preserved as a word of reproach, says Aristophanes. These creatures, i.e., the three sexes, were round, having four arms and legs, two faces on one head, etc. They infuriated Zeus by challenging and attacking the gods. Zeus smote them in two. The halves then sought each

other out and even now only by reuniting in love can we be fully happy. Aristophanes has little to say about those of mankind who derive from the androgynous sex (what we label heterosexuals), except that "adulterers are generally of this breed, and also adulterous women who lust after men."

The significant point for us in Plato's myth is that heterosexuality may well be a natural phenomenon, though of an inferior sort, of course. The unlikeness of male and female sets up a barrier to true, spiritual love that few if any heterosexuals can bridge. But, as their major concern is breeding and nest building, the ideal of perfect love is not necessary to their relationship. I believe that with understanding and proper treatment many heterosexuals can enter into what to them would be entirely satisfying relationships with the opposite sex. In anticipation of your objection, I'll say that I quite agree with you that

never, on entering a heterosexual home, have I felt that degree of oneness in love to be found in many homosexual homes. But remember, one does not suffer from the lack of what one is incapable of experiencing. In diagnosing heterosexuality itself as a disease, we are guilty of applying to it our own superior standards. This is a kind of misleading anthropomorphism.

Moderator: Thank you, Dr. Critttenham. I feel there may well be something to what you say. However, it strikes me that your viewpoint is of theoretical interest only. Perhaps I should not say 'only.' But even you will admit that most heterosexuals are sick and that we must do something soon or these heterosexuals will drown us in their progeny. And this brings me to our last topic: what cures have we now and in what direction should we look for further advancement? Our last speaker is Dr. Drivelle.

(At this point I had to leave for an appointment with my analyst.)

Time Is Contracting— 1984 Is HERE in 1967

That Big Brother is already watching you, the concept projected by George Orwell in his book, *1984*, was clearly brought out in an all-day symposium presented on the San Francisco State College campus on May 20, 1967. The program on "Privacy in a Crowding World," sponsored by the Faculty Program Center and the American Civil Liberties Union of

Northern California, was very revealing to leaders of San Francisco homophile organizations who attended.

While not trying to sound the panic button, I feel that information gleaned on "surveillance technology" should be of extreme importance to all members of the homophile community, whether they are in sensitive employment positions or not. *1984* is no

longer fiction—it's fact.

Prof. Alan Westin, of the Department of Public Law and Government at Columbia Univ., in the opening address on "Privacy in a Free Society" immediately launched into a description of how advances in technocracy invade our privacy. He pointed out that the victim need not know that he is taking a polygraph test any more. A Government employee called in for an interview can be exposed to a hidden camera which is recording his pupil dilation and his chair may be rigged to tune in on his physical responses and the movement of his limbs.

"With a computerized Government administration a 2000-page dossier on every one could be made available within three to five minutes," Dr. Westin declared.

As in 1984, Big Brother is watching you—your every sound and movement, Prof. Westin warned. Photos may now be taken in total darkness and at long range distance, and sound recording devices are becoming more available and less detectable all the time.

And the danger of what he called "Surveillance Technology" is that it can be sold in a democracy as being necessary to modernized law enforcement, research of behavior, economy in administration of internal revenue, welfare and other public agencies.

Privacy in a free society means the right of withdrawal from the community, the right to be different in a crowding world, Prof. Westin said. He went on to point out, however, that in a mass society with a bureaucratic and activist government, not many people believe that individuals should be left alone. They ask why the innocent

should be afraid of the polygraph, personality testing by employers or checks on one's bank accounts by credit bureaus. This is the heart of the debate in a technocracy.

Prof. Westin also pointed out the absence of any reference to privacy as such in the field of psychology. He described privacy at four levels:

1. Desire for solitude and spiritual reinforcement.
2. Need for intimacy of a small group (family, friends, etc.)
3. State of reserve, both private and public.
4. Privacy in public.

He spoke of surveillance in three categories: physical, psychological and data processing. All of which, he said, impinge on privacy. When an individual knows he is being watched, he can exercise free choice. He may bring his behavior to that which is socially accepted or he may defy those who would force him to comply with these standards.

Prof. Westin described the needs for protection of privacy in the following ways:

1. Safety valve factor or the emotional release function after abrasions with authority, which should not be subject to libel and slander laws.
2. Permissible deviation function or the host of norms which are set up, but which most Americans continue to violate.
3. Relaxation of social roles.
4. Sheltered experimentation and trial in developing ideas.

Without protections for these basic individual needs, there is a dehumanizing feature—a machine supervision instead of human relationship, Dr.

Westin said.

Psychological extractions compelling an individual to reveal his innermost thoughts through personality tests, polygraph, etc. is a threat to the individual and can be of great harm to his creativity. Instead of the feeling of personal autonomy, of uniqueness and self-realization, the individual begins to have the feeling he is being manipulated and controlled. As authorities penetrate further and further into the inner zone of the core self, one may also fall victim to selective exposure, being exposed while others are not.

Objection to personality tests which measure traits and behavior is that the individual doesn't want to be judged impersonally and that arbitrary standards may be enforced against a minority. Values are not figured openly, Dr. Westin said, and the public, therefore, cannot judge the validity.

"Psychology may be fine in counselling, BUT—" we are not ready to turn over all our value judgments to an elite psychological group, and intellectuals and liberals must fight for the right of the individual to choose to whom to bare his secrets, the professor warned.

In the matter of data surveillance, Dr. Westin pointed out that up to now data collecting had been decentralized, but that now the records of all collecting agencies (school, hospital, internal revenue, etc.) could now be centralized. Through the comprehensive documentation of a Computer Center we could change from a cash economy and apply records to people.

This is a violation of the First Amendment—the right to speak out or not to speak out, Prof. Westin de-

clared. We must use our law making talents to protect this right or our democracy will become obsolete, he concluded.

Harold Lipset, San Francisco "private eye," demonstrated various concealed surveillance devices including the recently publicized martini olive. He revealed hidden transmitters in a cigarette box, cigarette package, a book, cigarette lighter and plastic flowers. He also showed how tape recorders may be hidden in specially designed brief cases.

The detective described what he called an "electronic baby sitter," a unit which may be connected to a telephone line enabling a conversation any place in a room to be transmitted any place where a direct dial line could be open without the need for picking up the receiver in the "bugged" location. Another phone device, requiring no batteries, can trigger a tape recorder into operation by lifting the receiver.

"It just shows anything is possible," the private investigator said. "It just takes time, funds and imagination."

Regarding the use of recording equipment, Mr. Lipset spoke the Unruh bill in California making it illegal for citizens to record without consent of other persons involved. He pointed out that law enforcement agencies were exempt and protested that such recordings were just as necessary for the defendant. In many instances, he said, possession of such has established innocence as well as guilt and a person should be able to rely on conversation to some degree in establishing his defense case.

A panel discussion on "Your Government Dossier" was conducted by

Jack D. Barchas, Department of Psychiatry, Stanford University Medical Center. Panelists included Ernest Besig, Executive Director, American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California; Socrates Marmakos, San Francisco attorney-at-law; Stanley Rothman, chairman, Committee on Privacy and Government Information Systems, American Federation of Information Processing Societies, Redondo Beach; Thomas Ryther, Department of Sociology, San Francisco State College, and Mr. Lipset.

The concern of the panel, according to Moderator Barchas, was the proposed establishment of a Federal Data Bank which would gather and process data from various governmental agencies in a central depository, the effects of such a system upon dissent and creativity of citizens, and the purpose of such an agency in terms of evaluation of persons.

Mr. Besig called for less snooping, fewer dossiers and less cooperation by people with data collectors. He said that we are free agents and are not compelled to answer the FBI or police. It is not a proper function of Government, he warned, to investigate one's associations or beliefs. He deplored the fact that there were more and more loyalty and security checks being taken which are seeking to limit dissent and that people are forced to answer or lose clearances necessary to certain fields of employment.

Information gathered by investigators is subject to error, Mr. Besig pointed out, and people should be allowed to examine their dossiers and correct these errors. Also he deplored the practice of one agency sharing its

files with another agency without the consent of the individual. Government concerns need not be at the expense of privacy, Mr. Besig declared. There should be a balance, but if the scale is weighted, it should be in favor of privacy.

Mr. Lipset, a private investigator for 21 years, took the position that "if government can do it, private enterprise should also be able to." At present defendants must rely on statements "given freely." Witnesses cannot be forced to testify, he pointed out, and a defendant must have some right to rely on a conversation.

Electronic equipment can be utilized for good in many instances, Mr. Lipset said, but acknowledged the need for protection from misuse.

Why has such apparatus arisen in our society? Why don't people protest their presence? These questions were raised by Mr. Ryther. He did not blame ignorance and apathy. He felt the reason to be in contradictory values, the desire for both privacy and its invasion. He described the following dilemmas facing society:

1. Efficiency vs. privacy, such as the use of apparatus for credit leading to lower prices and higher buying power.
2. Specialization vs. preservation, the fact that efficiency, skill, affluence and anonymity brought about by specialization also brings lack of trust and fear of infiltration and exposure.
3. Justice vs. freedom, the checking of business records to see if employers are complying with regulations concerning hiring of minorities, for instance.

Mr. Rothman upheld the advantage of a Federal Data Center pointing out that it would be cheaper for Government having an aggregation of efforts now expended by various agencies in data collection. Computers in government would give better statistical support, would be useful in making decisions and better predictions in assessing effectiveness of government programs.

He admitted, however, that government officials could misuse such data and that errors could lead to injustice. But, he argued, there have been government information systems as long as we have had government and there has been a great deal of public trust in the Census Bureau, for example. Mr. Rothman claimed we need more concrete examples and cannot rely on conjecture alone.

There is nothing inherently evil in technology, only in overzealous official legal protection, Mr. Rothman contended. These are solvable problems, he declared.

Mr. Marmakos spoke from the point of view of labor law. He said that certain limitations we accept and acknowledge. We give up private life and opinion when we choose such careers as acting and politics. The employee in private industry acknowledges the balance of interest of the employer in his need to protect his business and the employee's need to protect his private life. Certain questions thus are relevant before hiring—reasons for leaving a job, criminal records, psychological and medical history. And once employed certain rules are invoked allowing the employer to investigate in case of pilfer-

age, abuse of rest periods, etc. There is also the public image of the company to be considered, even when it interferes with one's private life.

The employee's rights, on the other hand, call for arbitration and a degree of fairness. Constitutional safeguards don't always apply. The areas of the loyalty oath, lie detector test, search and seizure, burden of proof and confrontation are still very vague and largely unanswered in employer-employee relations, according to Mr. Marmakos.

"Can a company prevent an employee from expressing his views off the job?" he asked. "What we need is an industrial relations constitution."

The panelists agreed that there was need to work out a Federal statistical system for summary analyses. However, they raised such questions as who would have access, the need to be sure that use was for a reasonable purpose, the need for consent when information supplied to one source is transferred to another, protections where release of information may be subject to prejudicial response, protection of confidential records of the medical and legal professions, interpretation of information by incompetent people, misuse of dossiers for political power.

Highlight of the day's activities was the evening address by William O. Douglas, Associate Justice, United States Supreme Court, who was given a standing ovation both before and after his speech on "Computerized Man." Justice Douglas has served on the Supreme Court since 1939 and has been a fervent protector of the individual's rights.

McCarthyism, security, electronic surveillance and the computer added together makes for a different kind of society than that conceived under the Bill of Rights, Justice Douglas stated.

The idea of a Computer Center poses the question of what data should be put in and what use it will be put to, he added, and might lead to an evaluation of what ideas may be considered as dissent or subversive. The time may come when those in power can "push the subversive button" and eliminate their political foes, he warned.

Privacy is not in the United States Constitution per se, but in judicial decisions, Douglas pointed out, and is protected thereby against State as well as Federal actions. The 14th Amendment gives citizens the right to belong and to associate, freedom of speech and assembly, and the privacy of an individual's religious beliefs.

The jurist warned that a proposed centralized data center, if established, would mean that "privacy in this nation will be drastically diluted."

"Every individual needs both to communicate with others and to keep his thoughts and beliefs from others," Justice Douglas asserted. "This dual aspect of privacy means that a person should have the freedom to select for himself the time and circumstances when he will share his thoughts and attitudes with others and the extent of the sharing.

"This privacy has been increasingly invaded in modern times, and science is one of the chief culprits. The excuses for invasion are national security, protection against crime, efficiency, and the like. If we are to maintain the

barriers that make for a strong independent people, we must draw the line between action for which the individual may be exposed and thoughts for which he may never be."

What a person has done during his life should be available to "lawful" authorities, but what he believes should be beyond anyone's reach, Douglas said. "Beliefs are irrelevant to Government."

He also deplored the use of arrest records against employees, pointing out that false arrests are common. For instance, as many as 7000 were held for investigation in Washington, D.C. during a one year period. "There is no such crime as probable cause," he averred, and many arrests don't get to court. Yet they are still in the files.

To gales of laughter from the audience Justice Douglas cited some examples of the ridiculous multiple choice questions used in personality employment tests. But the repercussions are serious, he said. Although applicants are told no one has to answer all the questions, when four are left out they are automatically disqualified. Many of the choices are totally unrelated and the person is not allowed to qualify his replies. Results are figured on the basis that to day dream is to be neurotic, to be very religious is a sign of mental illness, and to cheat is to be smart. The psychological appeal is for conformity and the weeding out of individuality. Intelligence, aptitude and skill are sacrificed to the prime requisite of conformity and in getting along with one's fellows.

Through the lure of scientific analy-

sis some believe this type of nonsense should be fed into the computer, and Justice Douglas warned against allowing Government to go into the personnel file. He pointed out that a person could be labelled unjustly and for life, data could be misinterpreted, a condition could be changed but the computer wouldn't know, character references are highly subjective and could be turned against one because of an emotional rift, juvenile transgressions could be prejudicial, there is no right to counsel to argue a point or to correct misinformation, there is no opportunity for redemption and forgiveness.

Computers can handle the sociological data of age, education, etc. efficiently, Justice Douglas conceded. But beyond this there is danger without confrontation or cross examination.

"Computers have perfect memory," he pointed out. The intangible element is disregarded, and the imponderable value of choices is eliminated."

LESBIANA

by Gene Damon

Gatherings of eccentrics and plain nuts have always been popular with English mystery writers—possibly because England is so justifiably proud of its eccentrics. Geoffrey Household, who has been associated with a very masculine type of psychological novel (ROGUE MALE, etc.) has radically departed

With the employment of electronic methods comes the risk of improper use, he reiterated. Leakage of information is a collateral matter. With increased bureaucratic, police and political surveillance a new feudalism is on its way. With costs so much cheaper, with all facets of a person's life being retrievable by the mere pushing of a button, and with political pressure, the temptation would be irresistible, the justice said.

"The cause of privacy will be won or lost essentially in legislative halls, in constitutional assemblies and in the courts. If it is won, this pluralistic society of ours will experience a spiritual renewal. If it is lost, we will have written our own prescription for mediocrity and conformity," he concluded.

As the crowd cheered, Van Kennedy, chairman, Board of Directors, American Civil Liberties Union, analyzed Justice Douglas as "the antithesis of the computerized man—a humanized man. What a man!"

—Del Martin



from his usual pace in THE COURTESY OF DEATH, London, Michael Joseph, 1967, and Boston, Little, Brown, 1967. Retired mining engineer gets tangled up with a sinister sect that practices courteous assassination, by apologizing to each victim before the death blow. Among the nuts is Miss Filk, who

raises dogs and jealously protects her girl friend from the advances of various males. Minor, but entertaining.

The pseudonym Rhona Rollins, in her paperback original, *THE STRANGE TRIO*, Flame Books, 1967, produces a good example of what sad things Lesbian paperbacks are these days. This one follows the old familiar round of girl meets girl, falls in love, leaves girl temporarily for another girl, and ends up back in the arms of the first girl friend. It has the usual number of obligatory sex scenes, and the happy ending which used to indicate a fair evening waster. However, the writing is so atrociously bad that it is a physical and mental strain to read the book. There are no really good paperback originals around anymore. I can't help wondering what happened to Valerie Taylor, Paula Christian, Ann Bannon, etc. Rumors circulate and say that Ann Bannon has given up writing. Valerie Taylor and Paula Christian seem to feel there is no publishing market for their kind of book, and Artemis Smith has left the field in favor of working toward hardback publication in esoteric fiction (which hasn't actually happened yet). It is, to put it bluntly, a damned shame, because the audience who bought their books by the thousands of copies still exists, still lives in isolated towns throughout the United States and still needs this vicarious involvement with a world they cannot or do not share personally. I mentioned in last month's column that Dorothy Richardson's enormous novel series, *PILGRIMAGE*, has been published again in a four volume series by Dent, publishers, in London. Right on the heels of

that, Holt, Rinehart and Winston in the United States issued *PILGRIMAGE* also in a four volume edition. At the same time they issued a book by Horace Gregory called, *DOROTHY RICHARDSON: AN ADVENTURE IN SELF-DISCOVERY*. Reviews of this would indicate that he has carefully tied up the events in her life to the events in her novels that make up *PILGRIMAGE*. I have not yet seen the literary biography, but it may well shed light on the variant interludes in *DAWN'S LEFT HAND* (the pertinent novel in the series). If so, more later . . .

Taking first prize in the department of fools rushing in, I predicted that *LADIES' CLOSE*, by Sarah Kilpatrick, would be this year's big book. Well, it may still be, from the standpoint of literature, but I suspect popularity honors should and will go to *WALTZING MATILDA*, by new novelist Judy Gardiner, in her collection of three short novels, *THE POWER OF SERGEANT METTLESHIP*, London, Michael Joseph, 1967. It is only 59 pages long, but how many things have you read lately where you wished the author hadn't wound it all up and quit?

Most of you will feel this way about *WALTZING MATILDA*, for it is something special, something lovely. From the opening line, "Fidelia Denison and Matilda Gray had been living together as man and wife for a period of ten years . . .", to Fidelia's (Fido's) closing statement, "It'll all work out in the end . . . everything always does, if you only give it a chance," the reader is wholly enchanted. Fidelia and Matilda have a minor problem, a rather, I imagine, un-

usual problem. Talking about it here will spoil it. How they solve their problem, and also how they straighten out Fido's brother Rupert's love life, seems quite proper, though there are times when one suspects that Judy Gardiner had her tongue in her cheek a little. Everyone is supposed to be mildly unhappy these days, and happy stories about happy people muddling along contentedly are pretty rare. That's really all this one is, but it does seem remarkably refreshing. Mrs. Gardiner writes very well, and in tone she is a mature and adult Louise King. She has also had the good fortune to meet saner souls than those inhabitants of Moppet's and Miss Richardson's "butterfly" world. Good, good, good.

A 1958 best-seller, with a substantial Lesbian subplot, *THE VISITORS*, by Mary McMinnies, has been issued in paperback for the first time by Popular Library, 1967. If you missed this the first time round, pick it up. Story concerns a freewheeling bitch, Milly Prudoe, and how she occupies her free time in the absence of her husband and children. Among her victims is the loveable Countess Sophie Bielska, a 40 year old, butchy, child. Sophie loves the faithless Millie, too well, as the saying goes, and suffers for it accordingly. The author is obviously sympathetic to Sophie.

Sometimes, when particularly rushed, I give a book a short treatment, and forget it, and then pick it up a second time, possibly years later, and regret the quick dismissal earlier. Such a case is "The Diamond Hair Pin," short story by H.E. Bates in *THE FABULOUS MRS. V.*, London, Michael Joseph, 1964. Except for a sentence in the yearly

report on Lesbian literature for 1964, I did not mention this in the column. We have such an increasing rash of slam, bang, sex and sadism in our books these days, that a fey and gentle story seems uncommonly welcome. This brief tale deals with loneliness, a kind of common denominator in the human condition. A boy finds a hairpin on a park bench, advertises for its owner, and turns up a very isolated girl, who is trying to overcome the suicide of her lover, another girl. Nice handling . . . and for devoted general readers the rest of the collection will prove equally delightful. Cat buffs note, a good cat story, "The Cat Who Sang," is included. (Perhaps *LADDER* commentator, Ben Cat, would enjoy this one?)

Novelist Robert Liddell is virtually unknown in this country, though justifiably famous in England, his own country. Several of his books deal with male homosexuals, notably *THE UNREAL CITY* (London, Jonathan Cape, 1952), and his latest novel, *AN OBJECT FOR A WALK*, London, Longmans, 1966, is of interest in both areas, since male and female homosexuals dominate the cast. The device of an amoral central character, blessed with fatal charm, is an oft-used device, and generally is fascinating. Set in the 1930's, for the most part, this is the story of Geoffrey Thwaite, heel of the Western World, seen through the eyes of the people whose lives he influences.

His first victim, Flora Sprule, falls in love with him while she is very very young, and in her later years she is interested only in other women. (Mr. Liddell does *not* indicate that Geoffrey is to blame for this, but the inference is unavoidable.)

The second victim, and the novel's narrator, Charles Harbord, is Geoffrey's lover in their college days, and the final victim, Hester, marries him. The three "chosen ones" are all good friends, and their meeting years later under war-time conditions in the deserts of the Middle East, provides the denouement. Robert Liddell writes in a leisurely manner, taking great pains to cover the necessary psychological ground thoroughly. Fine for everyone who does not have a short attention span.

We have talked this month and last about two important books: *LADIES' CLOSE*, by Sarah Kilpatrick, and *WALTZING MATILDA*, by Judy Gardiner. The former winning honors for its author's skill as a writer, primarily, and the latter because it is a delightful Lesbian love story, sunny and pleasant without being mawkish. So I am faced now with the task of reviewing *THERESE AND ISABELLE*, by Violette Leduc, N.Y., Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1967, which will certainly be the most widely read, the most reviewed and talked about Lesbian novel in the general media. It will do, probably the conception of Lesbianism in the public's eye as did *LA BATARDE*, by Miss Leduc, in 1965. Since it is wholly Lesbian, it might even do more harm. It is difficult to be the dissenting voice in the face of so much approval, but Miss Leduc is not a good writer. She is far too concerned with making poetic images out of garbage scenes. Her delicate preoccupation with scatological imagery is more nauseating than Henry Miller's blunt interpretations of the same sort of material. Spraying fecal matter with flower

scented phrases does not alter the composition of the material. This is said to have been a part of *LA BATARDE*, which was privately printed before *LA BATARDE*, and then deleted from it. It might better have been left unresurrected. The protagonists are schoolgirls, approximately 14 to 16 years old (we are never told their ages) who are caught up in an affair which is wholly sexual in emphasis, and more overtly sadistic than one expects from females of this age group. These infants have already progressed to the point where sexual exhaustion marks many of their encounters. Nothing about them is related except their sexual preoccupation with one another and their fear of separation. It would be possible to dismiss Miss Leduc's book as tripe, except that it won't be treated this way in review media, and many will be lead to read it, expecting one thing and finding another. Worse, there are moments in the book when Miss Leduc forgets herself, drops the imagery and the painting of beautiful pictures around ugly events, and lets her story flow naturally, and then the book assumes a different shape. It isn't often enough, and it doesn't compensate for the overdone tone, and the ugliness, but when it happens it is possible to imagine that she could be a good writer. One outstanding scene occurs on the fifth page of the novel when she says that: "Those in love are always standing on the platform of a railroad station." Another occurs on the last page, but I will let you read that for yourself. And despite all I have said, the book must be read, if only to see what the current literary image of Lesbianism is like, in the field of esoteric fiction.

Though radically different, Miss Leduc invites a kind of comparison with Vin Packer-Ann Aldrich. Having either of them publishing actively is much like having a snake in one's bedclothing, they strike a devastating blow.

A just for the record mention occurs in Edward Caddick's amusing and ironic, *HANNAH AND THE PEACOCKS*, Boston, Little, Brown, 1966, 1967. This is primarily a male homosexual novel, and one of the better ones of recent months, but there is a brief nightclub scene featuring heavily bejewelled Lesbians from Spain on a holiday in Tangiers. Fun and games . . .

A slickly-handled, second-rate adventure story, *FLAVOUR OF DE-CAY*, by William Camp, London, Anthony Blond, 1967, uses an amusing device to attract reader attention. It wasn't too long ago that including a Lesbian, even a fake one, in a novel would have been enough to make a book less publishable. This might have been an advantage in this case, for the novel has little to recommend it. When the tough guy hero (he's a fake too) meets the obligatory young beauty, she appears to be a Lesbian . . . She isn't and the book isn't very interesting, and why was it published at all?

A GIRL CALLED JULES, by Milena Milani, London, Hutchinson, 1967, is a translation from the original Italian. There seems to be a rash of novels about female adolescence coming from Italy. Last year we had *RAGE*, by Lorenza Mazzetti, which was a better, though similar book, and Dacia Mariani's, *THE HOLIDAY*, also similar in content. Jules is a beauty, and is thus beset with all the attendant temptations. Boys

formidably blast at her defences, a communist wheel takes a turn at trying to make out with her, and a Lesbian housekeeper warns her off men. Toward the end she breaks out of her shell, and the author makes it clear that simple sexual frustration is the cause and effect. Ah well, not good, not bad, probably true. For our interest here, minor.

A. E. Hotchner, in his biography-memoir, *PAPA HEMINGWAY*, N.Y., Random House, 1966, includes an interesting bit of information about Ernest Hemingway's celebrated Lesbian short story, "The Sea Change." During their travels together, Hemingway took Hotchner to a bar, and there related the events in real life which prompted the story (events which took place in that particular bar). He names the man involved, Charles Wertenbaker, and indicates that both of the women were extremely beautiful and very very feminine. This can be found on pages 126, 127 and 128 in *PAPA HEMINGWAY*. An interesting bit, in view of Hemingway's known obnoxious prejudices.

Paperback publisher Macfadden deserves great credit for issuing Theodora Keogh's impressive Lesbian novel, *THE OTHER GIRL*, this year. This is its first appearance in the United States, having been first published in hardcover in England by Neville Spearman, 1962. It is hard to imagine why it has not appeared in the United States in hardcover, since it is clearly an American novel as far as setting and cast are concerned. Don't miss this one, particularly you California people old enough to remember the celebrated "Black Dahlia" murder case. This novel is a roman a clef based on the case, and although

the solution is a chilling one, it is not at all impossible. This really is a unique Lesbian novel, nothing faintly like it has ever been published.

What a pleasure the books have been so far this year. Now comes one of the most romantic treatments of a Lesbian love affair in some time, marred only by its brevity, *OVER THE MOUNTAINS*, by Pamela Frankau, N. Y., Random House, 1967. This is the third volume in a trilogy entitled, *CLOTHES ON A KING'S SON*. Each of the novels can be read separately, and only this one concerns us here. Primarily the story of the Weston family, and son, Lt. Thomas Weston's experiences during World War II. Before going to war in 1940, Thomas has fallen in love with Rab, and they have been lovers, at least for one night. Rab, however, has also gone to war in a sense, and is serving with a women's group in France. We learn in interior monologues that Rab has always skirted Lesbian involvement in her love life. It comes as no surprise when she falls deeply in love with Noel Vaillancourt, feminine heir of a wealthy French family. Their affair is very brief, simply because Noel is killed in a wartime accident. Later Rab indicates that no love has ever meant as much to her, and that furthermore, no love ever will. We are left not knowing precisely what di-

rection her life will take. Miss Frankau is not noted for romantic portraits, and her scenes between Rab and Noel are among the most beautiful love scenes in current fiction, and certainly some of the warmest (discounting, of course, the blow-by-blow technicolor things which often pass these days as "romance"). As I mentioned, the only thing that keeps this from being a really big title in our genre is length. Only 82 pages out of 340 are devoted to Rab, and of these, only 29 are completely about Noel and Rab, though Rab is the novel's only major character except for Thomas Weston. Lovely stuff, highly

Coming next month, a review of a new book, *THE SHORT YEAR*, by Barbra Ward, N. Y., Putnam, 1967. From advance notices this may well be another blockbuster for the year. (From time to time I feel compelled to remind readers of this column that it is necessary to complete each column some three to four months in advance. This column, for example, was compiled in May, 1967 and typed during early June, for use in September, 1967 issue. A rather sad additional note, during the typing of this column, the death of Pamela Frankau, discussed above, was announced. It is good, I think, that she lived to complete her trilogy, which she had stated she considered her most important work.)

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THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE A Bibliography

Dr. Jeannette Foster

Writing a favorable review of a work in which one has been overgenerously cited might be taken as reciprocal back-scratching. So I hasten to identify with Bernard Shaw who once said anent drama criticism: If my father's life depended on my saying a bad play was a good one, I'd still say it was bad.

Happily I can affirm with clear conscience that I consider Damon and Stuart's, *THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE* an excellent bibliography. The authors have stated its scope clearly in their introduction: all known and personally verified books (on the specified subject) in the English language, to the end of 1966. The result is 79 pages, with an estimated average of 27 titles per page; an imposing total close to 2250 items. In one of her few textual notes the senior compiler mentions the numerous passing references to Lesbians or Lesbianism in modern literature, more than a few too unimportant to justify their inclusion; i.e., of too little interest to reward a search for the work containing them. (This reviewer can think of but one such crumb—in Erskine's and Dennis's, *THE PINK HOTEL*, memorable only because it bobs up so unexpectedly in a late chapter of that lustily het-

erosexual extravaganza). Thus, though a scientific testimony to completeness is impossible unless one re-checks all sources (1), we have watched Damon's work for a decade as well as her current serial-booknotes in *THE LADDER* and *TANGENTS*, and are willing to stick a neck out and say this present job is as complete as any two compilers can make it.

The arrangement, a single author alphabet, may appear a bit daunting to searchers for some special form, type, or quality of Lesbian material, but it is the only arrangement practicable without a large committee of editors and unlimited time and money. The heterogeneous resulting list here is rendered easily usable by the clever group of symbols very clearly explained in the introduction. These distinguish literary form (novel, poetry, drama, biography, etc.); major or minor Lesbian elements or mere "variance" in the content; and particularly sympathetic or understanding treatment of the theme.

This matter of symbols should not be left without some reference to the large number of titles followed by "T"—i.e., Trash (or tripe if you prefer). This is put out today without exception by paperback original houses, on inferior paper and with

suggestive bright-colored covers. (Some of the better paperback houses sometimes employ the latter device also). By a statistical count of every tenth page, this inferior material constitutes slightly over 52% of the whole. The reviewer has read enough of this stuff to characterize it briefly: most of it sails as close to the wind of pornography as censorship law allows. Indeed, one suspects from the notably short life of the "worst" presses their either legitimate or self appointed vigilantes manage periodically to run them out of business.

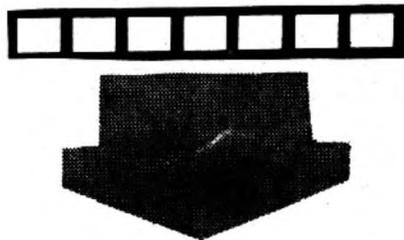
Moreover, from experience gained during four years' work for the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research, we can assert that this "trash" bears signs of male authorship, whatever the pseudonymous sex may be, and is aimed at a male audience. What do men find in these "Lesbo" volumes? Well -- on the principle of the ancient joke: What makes more noise than a pig caught under a gate? Answer: Two pigs -- apparently the crudely presented situation of two women so aroused that they will use each other is twice as stimulating to some men as a picture of one woman in like predicament.

Then why, one may ask, include this stuff in a bibliography of Lesbian literature? First, one supposes, because it is technically Lesbian in action, and helps to indicate the quantity of interest in the subject. Second, because reading and or observation of a couple of titles issued by an ephemeral publisher will warn a reader of sympathy and taste what *not* to bother acquiring in the future. Third -- and we hope least -- there may be a few Lesbians so solitary and frustrated that they

can find some vicarious release in reading the more credible of the trashy titles.

To return to the superior 50% of this bibliography, especially those starred titles in the A class, in which the interest is mainly Lesbian and the treatment sympathetic. Many of these are richly rewarding psychologically, and more than a few are also of high literary quality. (The compilers, however, wisely disavow intent to pass belletristic judgments). The latter type of authors range from Ariosto to Zola, from Dorothy Baker to Mary Renault and Virginia Woolf.

In short, you can never spend two dollars to better advantage than by purchasing this really first-class and all-inclusive bibliography on THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE.



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Relationship

Life
in
deadness
is talked about
by its
color.
It is reds and greenies
and jacketed in yellow.

Smoke matters
when music
is considered
by its
letter and number.
It is something to do
in the someplace to go
which is our something to be.

Drink
in
dryness
is a passcard
to
sit.
It is a means to
a means, but
its
container
can be
something to hold.

We must have
walls
in this place
built
for touch.
There can be
no
relationship
when
sameness consumes
and
difference destroys.

-STORMY

READERS RESPOND

TO VALERIE TAYLOR:

It is impossible to resist replying to Valerie Taylor's excellent critical letter in the June issue of *THE LADDER*. She discusses the article, "Poetry of Lesbiana," written by Terri Cook and me, which appeared in the November, 1966, issue of *THE LADDER*.

First, H. D.'s novel, *BID ME TO LIVE*, is, as we recorded, "pertinent to some extent." It is a very thin covering, granted; but she does not disguise her Lesbian leanings—particularly in the last section of the novel. If you must have the key to the "roman a clef," we recommend examination of the book, *PRIVATE COLLECTION*, by Jean Starr Untermeyer, N.Y., Alfred A. Knopf, 1965, pages 85 and 86. Hilda Doolittle's only recorded feminine lover was Winifred Ellerman, known, of course, as Bryher, the famous novelist. Following the criteria established later in your letter, we feel we must point out that both of these women were married. Hilda Doolittle was married to Richard Aldington (author of the Lesbian poetry volume, *THE LOVE OF MYRRHINE AND KONALLIS*). Bryher has been married twice; first to writer Robert McAlmon, whose contributions to both male and female homosexual literature are too numerous to list here; and then to Kenneth MacPherson, author of at least one male homosexual novel.

Katherine Mansfield never, surely,

crossed the line between heterosexual and homosexual passion; but she was very concerned with the subject in her writing. Her "*JOURNAL*" affords her only poetic references (and that was the scope of the article) but she wrote several short stories dealing with the subject: notably "*Bliss*," which is available in many anthologies including *LESBIAN LOVE IN LITERATURE*, edited by Stella Fox, Avon, 1962.

We both sincerely apologize to you, Miss Taylor, if you feel we meant to insult Amy Lowell. On the contrary, we both ardently admire her work, and pity her many unhappy hours. Regardless of the physical ailments which ended her life, her poetry reflects an insistent unhappiness at her obesity and an intense preoccupation with androgynous beauty. It is very true that Ada Russell lived many long loving years with Amy Lowell, as has been recorded by her many biographers. Despite this, Miss Lowell records an astonishing amount of unrequited love in her poetry and often ties it to the "willow shape" which eluded her in life.

No one questions the fact that Edna St. Vincent Millay (and many other pertinent figures in all fields) had more heterosexual affairs than homosexual ones. She did, however, specifically state publicly) at least once in her life, that she was as much a homosexual as a heterosexual. (See *GREAT COMPANIONS*, by Max Eastman, N.Y., Farrar, 1959.

A 27-page article on Millay is included in the book.)

Again we must point out that the scope of the article in question was just what the title implied: "Poetry of Lesbiana." Obviously we weren't trying to say that every author who has written Lesbian poetry is a Lesbian—since some 10 cited are males, this would be rather silly.

It seems odd that of all of the possible names you might have chosen for contention where you state: "One grows a little tired of these evaluations in which one line out of a hundred or a thousand is seized upon to prove that So-and-So is one of us," you chose May Sarton. With very little exception her entire poetic output deals with Lesbian passion, either specifically or indirectly. We wish there were sufficient space here to indulge in a poem by poem examination of her volumes. We would ask that you read her entire body of work, as we have, for additional insight.

Lastly, your major point has not been missed. You argue, in effect, that you would rather have had an article on poetry without orientation references. Fine; but *THE LADDER* is not the place for it. The way Lesbians become "integrated" into society is not to pass as heterosexuals. Passing as white doesn't often work for the Negro; nor does name changing alter a Jew. Lesbians have the double jeopardy responsibility shared by all members of all minorities. They must contribute on two levels; as citizens of the world first and then as Lesbians.

May we, by the way, take this opportunity to tell you how much we admire your contribution to the genre of Lesbian literature, and to

hope there will someday be another Valerie Taylor novel?

Lennox Strong
and
Terri Cook

Dear Miss Sanders:

In reply to "Kay" of Houston, Texas, whose letter appeared in the June issue of *THE LADDER*. Yes, I have seen many of Kyle Onstott's novels, and those he has co-authored with Lance Horner. He is sole author of *DRUM, MANDINGO*, and *MASTER OF FALCONHURST* and with Lance Horner has written, *THE BLACK SUN*, *FALCONHURST FANCY*, and *THE TATOED ROOD*. His publishers include N.Y., Dial Press, and the little known Denlinger Press of Richmond, Virginia. Some of his novels, particularly the recent ones, have been paperback originals published by Fawcett Gold Medal. To my knowledge, he has been concerned with male homosexuality only. However, I would be grateful to learn of any Lesbian characters or action in any of his works.

It is always good to be informed of any Lesbian novels found by *LADDER* readers. The boom in publishing in this field today makes it impossible for one person to find every title. I have not yet found a way to read more than two books for every day of each year. I am always grateful to hear of any new Lesbian title, however minor. I would much rather hear of one book, one hundred times, then fail to find it at all.

Gene Damon

THE SHAPE OF LOVE

Jody Shotwell

Part 5

So, out of conflict, the shape of love distorts. The wish to love, the hope for love retracts. Withdraws into the self, sickened and sad. Your half-invaded stronghold, wistful of a more benevolent occupation, is once more despoiled. Not out of evil or even one destructive wish. Angel, like Ron, was innocent as the parasitic vine is innocent. Acting in accordance to her nature, she reaches out, embraces, feeds upon—and if you will allow, must finally destroy. And so you struggle, still hoping for a miracle that will transform her into something strong and stalwart. Not for you, but for herself. So she might stand beside you, neither clinging nor crushing. Or stand alone, when that time should come.

But you, Julia, have not been for Angel, the miracle-worker. Now, at the end, you have given her nothing, and Marian Linden's words, "You've been so good for Angel!" echo reproachfully in your ears.

Perhaps it is for Ilga to do for Angel what you haven't done. In Ilga there must be some answer you could not supply—some response to Angel's urgencies that you can never make. And knowing Angel at least this well, you know her urgencies must be satisfied. For good—or evil, whatever the case may be.

So, riding toward home and singing your silly songs, you know that you will once again be uninhabited. That you will mourn your brief walk in the sun, even if it took you just from grief to grief.

(7) Saturday, 3 P.M.

Outside the movie house you stop and look for Scott.

"He's probably on his way home," Angel said.

"They're still coming out. Let's wait a bit."

Angel slumps down behind the wheel and closes her eyes. "Wake me up when you're ready to go."

You look quickly at that piquant face before you turn back to the thinning crowd of children coming from the matinee. It occurs to you for the first time that she will miss Scotty. She loves him. She has the whole thing for him. The parental ambition, the sibling rivalry. She is jealous of him, impatient with him, dreams enormous dreams for him.

Does she think, at all, you wonder—suddenly bitter—that her flight from you is a flight from Scott, too? And what will you say when he misses her? How do you explain to a child that only friends are forever, that lovers are just for a

little while? Children are profound. They surprise you, sometimes. You discovered this the first Christmas after Ron died.

You were hanging a tiny angel-doll on the Christmas tree. Ron brought it to you the year before and attached it to the light fixture over the dining room table. It swung there from that Christmas to this one. But on this Christmas Eve, while Angel was visiting her mother, you took the doll down, dusted it, and hung it on the tree. Scott, watching you, said, "It was this day last year when Ron took me to the toy store."

"Yes," you said. "It was."

It had been one of the happier days. You went into town with them, but turned them loose in the toy store while you completed some shopping. Ron was more excited than Scott, if such a thing were possible.

"You may have anything you want," she said.

You protested. "Let him choose just one thing. Please!"

Scott chose the electric racing-car set. It was terribly expensive, but the faces on the two of them when they emerged from the toy shop justified anything. Scotty was giggling.

"Ron was so funny, Mother," he said. "She pretended she wanted to buy that great big Santa Claus in the window!"

Ron chuckled. "The saleswoman thought I was a lunatic. But I talked her into asking the manager if she could sell it to me."

You laughed, too, looking at the Santa, seven feet tall with his belly shaking and a loud "Ho, Ho, Ho" coming from somewhere inside.

"Just what I need in my living room!" you said. It was joyful, ridiculous day. But then, Ron was always creating ridiculous situations. Sometimes unnerving situations. But somehow, nobody ever really minded.

Now, on this day, watching you hang the angel doll on the tree, Scott said, "It doesn't seem as if Ron is really dead."

"But she is darling," you said through the horrible lump beginning to form in your throat.

Then he said, "You know, Mom, I really didn't believe it when you first told me. I thought you just said that so I would forget about her."

"You know I wouldn't do anything like that," you whispered. And then you went into the kitchen and leaned against the refrigerator and wept.

Later, Angel was to say, "You let Ron corrupt Scott. He expects to be rewarded for everything he does."

You couldn't argue this. Possibly, corrupt was not the word, but it was true—Ron gave him too much, spoiled him.

"I believe in spoiling children," she would say. "I think children should be happy. It's the only happy time."

She spent hours going from place to place, searching for something Scotty wanted. Anything, for which he might express the most casual wish. Perhaps you should have been more firm. But in Ron you recognized a need akin to your own. Something abstruse from some forgotten time. Making it a compel-

ling thing to bring delight to a child's face. Both of you finding it almost unendurable to disappoint any child. "We promised Scott," became a kind of byword, and you and Ron were together in making it nearly a life or death matter to keep the promise. It seemed to be, in both of you, the utterance to some inner cry, "I am a child. Don't fail me!"

In Ron, this need was a mysterious thing. Not mysterious in you, not at all. But Ron, proclaiming endlessly her happy childhood, saw no mystery. Her life, examined in turn by Joan, by you, by others, remained entirely unexamined by Ron, to the end. The riddle was only partly unraveled the day you went to see the Matson's after Ron died.

You and Angel, and Angel most unwilling, drove to Royale three weeks after the funeral. You never expected to go there again, but the invitation, which seemed to you to be an invitation to solve a mystery, was irresistible.

"I'll never forget the first day we saw Ron," Elizabeth Matson said. "The tiniest, cutest thing, with those enormous blue eyes, peeking through those hedges out there."

Your eyes followed her's . . . looked through the window of the Matson sitting-room to the row of hedges and beyond to the big house next door.

"I was having my sixteenth birthday party out on the lawn," Phyllis Matson said. "And there she was, in her little overalls, watching, until we finally invited her to come over and have a piece of cake."

"We watched her grow up," Elizabeth said. Her face grew sad, puzzled. "I don't know what happened. She always seemed to be such a happy-go-lucky child. Ever after her father was killed in that foolish accident."

"She was too young, really, to feel much about her father's death," Phyllis said. "I think she changed most when her mother died."

"Changed, how?" you asked.

"Got wild. She was always somewhat wild. But Kathryn, (her mother) could handle her. But you know, Ron could twist Granny Nolan right around her finger. And that woman was a harridan, if ever there was one."

"She met her match in Ron," Elizabeth chuckled.

"It wasn't really funny, Liz," Phyllis said, severely. "I didn't like to see a child-manipulate people that way."

"Granny deserved it," her sister retorted. "She set the example, you know. She manipulated everybody in town. She pulled rank all over the place. Every time Ron got into some kind of scrape, her grandmother would get her out of it."

"That's true," Phyllis admitted. "Ron was never punished for anything. She and Granny always convinced each other that it was somebody else's fault."

"But why do you suppose she got into so much trouble?" you asked.

"I don't know," Elizabeth Matson replied. "Sometimes I wonder if she was

really a happy child at all. She was always a little clown—but I don't know."

You went home that day with a new conception of Ron. With part of the mystery solved, but a new one to replace it. You thought of Granny Nolan and the portrait painted of her by the Matsons. So different from the one Ron painted. "The power behind the throne" she would say. But always, implied, the gentle monarch, sweet-faced, full of simple wisdom. Not a harridan, nor a manipulator, or one to be manipulated. Suddenly you wondered if Ron's whole life had been a fantasy, peopled with her own images, including her image of herself—and the clown-face never removed.

Just once, only once, there was a time you knew you saw her totally unmasked. When she lay, naked-faced, playing it straight for the first time, in a hospital bed. When the anaesthetic wore off after the hideous operation and Ron knew, at last, a kind of pain she couldn't grin through. You sat beside her bed and she gripped your hand, and even then attempted to restrain the moans that broke loose from her lips.

"She's very brave," the nurse whispered.

"You should've seen her going off to the operating room this morning," you whispered back. "You wouldn't believe it."

You had gone early to be with her before they took her up. The nurses were reluctant to let you into her room. "She's had a sedative. She's supposed to relax."

But you begged for just a few minutes, because you'd promised her. She was sitting up in bed, grinning.

"Hey, you're supposed to be relaxing," you said. For answer she swooped you into her arms and kissed you.

Viv and Angel got past the nurses, too, and you felt a twinge of annoyance. You wanted to be with Ron alone, at this time. But then you knew that Viv had to be there, too. She was, in some way, still one of the satellites revolving about Ron. Or one of the branches on the gnarled genealogical tree of Ron's experiences. Whatever, her concern for Ron was strong and real. So, you greeted them and made room for them beside Ron's bed.

The nurses forgot about you and you sat close, Ron's arm around you, until they came to take her. Viv's face was stark and Angel seemed about to faint. But Ron was laughing and joking as she climbed onto the wheeled table.

"See you later, kids," she said. "Julia—you'll be waiting for me when I come back—won't you?"

"You bet I will," you said.

You were. You sat downstairs in the waiting room with Viv and Angel, and when they left, you stayed there. Two hours later Doctor Carroll came to you and told you it was over and everything was fine. You went racing up the steps to the second floor.

So then, with you in the chair close beside her bed, Ron slept until the anesthetic began to wear off and the pain began. It never stopped. They

gave her drugs, but then she only drifted off until the pain broke through. She lay straight and still, except for the grip of suffering on her face, her bitten lips. You never loved her more than you loved her then. And you never saw her again with unmasked face.

The day next, her clown-face was firmly affixed. The clown-face, the lover's face, the angry face, the entreating face. The blue eyes sparkling, the blue eyes cold. The drink-sick eyes dull and red, the despairing eyes, the day you sent her away forever. And which, if any, was real?

For later, when Angel fed you the poison, drop by drop, you didn't feel that anything was real. You couldn't blame Angel, really. She'd had Ron right up to her eyeballs. First, living with Viv and the overwhelming evidence of her lasting Ron-devotion. Then, coming to you, and having to face and fight the very same ghost. So when she told you of Ron's perfidies, her total lack of loyalty to you, you cringed. But you listened. And soon you even begged the cruelty. Put it like a searing poultice on your wounds. "Make me hate her!" your open wounds cried out. "Tell me every traitorous word!"

You drank the poison greedily, grateful to your poisoner. Taking, eagerly the poison from her lips, together with her kisses.

But now you marvel at your lack of perspicacity. You never pondered that the hand of the poisoner is more deadly than the poison. Is more evil, rather, than the poison. You have no doubt that Angel told you truths—yet what is there within her to make it possible? Somewhere, a coldness vaster than you can imagine. Somewhere a heartlessness beyond description. Yet, perhaps it is no more than the cold heartlessness of the very young. Blameless as the sour green fruit upon the tree, unwarmed yet by time and the sun. This was the "something more" you felt intuitively in the enchanting child she seemed to be. And now you've sunk your teeth beneath the rosied cheek and found the hard and bitter core.

Perhaps, you think now, it won't really bother her about Scott at all. She says she loves him, but that love is, doubtless, part of her love for you. And that gone, it will all be gone. Her dreams for him? At home there are the catalogues from expensive military schools. Angel sent for them, and you, with wry smile and wistful heart, turned the pages hopelessly.

"I never could afford—" you said.

"But Scotty's bright. He might get a scholarship. And I could help—"

You look at her and you smile, it's kind of crocodile smile, because behind it you are thinking, "My little darling, you can't even help yourself!" Because Angel, you were discovering, was in the grip of an enormous inertia-somewhere shrinking from the world outside. Content, like some little stray, to take her comfort and her nourishment between the dual firesides of your home and her mother's. It has taken longer than it should for you to see the fear, the paralyzing terror. Before you understood, you urged her off to interviews, perused the papers for a job she might enjoy. Once or twice she fought her terror down and ventured forth, a fine young lady with her gloves and purse.

She got two jobs. Each lasted just one week.

You talked of school. But that, too, lay in the realm outside the nest, shrouded with unknown bugabears. And even when you understood, you still could not accept. You look at her fine, strong young body, consider her quick, active mind, and rebel against the waste.

"You bug me, just like Mother," Angel said, finally.

So you clamp your lips, for the time, in just the way Angel was to clamp hers later when you quarreled about Scott.

"Why did you give him more money?" she asked. "He just had his allowance on Friday."

"Yes, I know," you said.

"You shouldn't give him any more if he uses his allowance up all at one time."

She chose a loaded moment. Resentments had been for days stirring inside of you, building since the last visit with Marian Linden. Angel climbed up to the attic that morning and brought down a huge carton.

"Fathernalia!" she giggled. The three of you, you, Angel and Marian Linden sat on the living room floor and looked through the scrapbooks, the clippings and pictures.

"Everybody loved him" Angel's mother said, wet-eyed. "He was such a wonderful man. So smart! I don't know what he saw in a dummy like me—"

And you gave her a quick squeeze and a kiss on the cheek. "It's because you're so beautiful," you said.

Later that day, while Angel napped, Marian Linden took you for a ride. She wanted to show you a new house on the ocean front. When you looked and admired, she drove off, but not toward home. And then you knew she wanted to talk.

"Julia, what is Angel going to do? I can't get a thing out of her. You don't know how terrible I feel about her staying at your place so much. You've a child of your own to keep. Why don't you just put her out?"

"Do you put her out, Marian?" you temporized.

"No, but she's my responsibility, not yours."

"She shouldn't be anybody's responsibility, at her age," you said. Then feeling suddenly disloyal, you added, "I love having her there, Marian. But I'm as frustrated as you are. It isn't good for her, to be so idle."

Marian Linden sighed and said, "I just don't understand her. Her father was such a brilliant, hard-working man. And I'm not lazy, Julia, I never was...."

You try to console, to encourage, to comfort. But what can you really say, when you are helpless as she is?

"You and Mother are always talking in corners," Angel complained, driving back to the city. "What were you talking about today?"

"You," you said, bluntly.

"What did she say?" She tried to seem amused, but anger and annoy-

ance edged her voice.

"Oh, Angel. You know she's very unhappy about you. It's nothing new."

And you thought of those first days, when Marian Linden was not unhappy about Angel . . . and your failure was a bitter medicine.

"It isn't that she really wants me to work," Angel was saying. "The truth of the matter is, she's ashamed of me."

"That isn't true."

"Yes. When people ask her what I'm doing, she doesn't know what to say, and then she's embarrassed. Ashamed of me."

"And you, darling? Are you not embarrassed when people ask you what you do?"

She bit her lip, because it was true.

So, you were full of this when she reproached you about indulging Scotty.

"Angel," you said, slowly, deliberately, "I think this is really none of your business. Perhaps when you stop taking money from your mother, you might be justified in your criticism." You were fighting dirty, but you thought perhaps it was high time.

"You are naive, Julia," said. "Don't you know that Mother loves to give me money? She has to give me things. It's her way of showing how much she loves me." Bitterly. "They never really loved me, you know. Everything they gave me was all for their own satisfaction. Father bought me boats and horses so he could pretend I was a boy. And Mother only wanted a baby-doll to play with . . ."

"That's too simple, Angel. It's so basic, it's almost obsolete. *Everybody* gives for the inner satisfaction they get out of it. Parents are no exception. But it isn't right, it isn't fair, to build your whole attitude, your whole . . . what? . . . way of life on such a judgment."

You think of Marian Linden, saying to you once, "I just want her to love me!" And for a moment, you consider, perhaps Angel is right. Perhaps all they *did* want was for her to love them. But then you think again, and you know that all of us want to be loved, and this is no condemnation.

Angel said, "I used to use this thing in Mother. When I was little and Father punished me for something, I'd run to her. And whatever punishment Father gave me, she'd lift, or make it up to me, somehow. Just because she wanted me to love her."

"You *still* use her this way," you said. "Look, just because you understand what you're doing, doesn't excuse it. We're all products of our environment. But damn it, Angel, there comes a time we have to assume some responsibility for our actions. You are twenty-two years old. Don't blame everything on your parents now."

So this was Angel, who was attempting to direct your son's training, and no wonder you were provoked.

"I must ask you, please, never to speak of this again," you said. "I might be making mistakes with Scott, but they're my mistakes, and I want to hear no

more about it."

So, you bound her to silence, and you could see that it rankled. That it was just one more thing to change the shape of love. One more resentment between you, the wedge ever widening, to force you from each other.

All of the children had gone from the sidewalk in front of the theatre.

"I suppose we missed him," you said. Angel roused and started the car. When you got home, Scott was waiting for you down stairs on the porch steps.

(8) Saturday, 4 P.M.

"Saturday afternoons!" you said.

"Your most favorite time of the week!" Angel supplied.

You laughed. It was a little hollow. Your feeling for Saturday afternoon was only a remembered thing, anyway. It has been a long time since they were really something to care about, to look forward to. And this Saturday afternoon, except for what was in reality happening, could almost seem to be normal. Almost. Except for your walk this morning, and the way you feel inside.

"No. But I was going to say—you just can't imagine what they used to be like "

Scott is having an early dinner in the living room, watching a cowboy thing on television. You and Angel are resting, side by side, on your bed. Later, you will bathe and dress, and when Mrs. Cochran comes to stay with Scott, you will be leaving for dinner out and the drive up to The Sparrow. Since you arrived home this afternoon, Angel seems to have pushed her distraction out of sight, as though reconciled to what remains of this day. Perhaps to tolerate and make the most of it, or the best of it, in any case. So you relax and ride with the current.

"By this time of day," you went on, musingly, "The opera would be over. Roger Hunt had the best radio then, so we'd usually be there. Anyhow, I was posing quite a lot for Roger, so I'd go over early. Others would drop in, and we'd listen to the opera and drink wine." You shuddered. "I don't know how we did it. That sickening muscatel—"

"And then you'd all pitch in and cook up some spaghetti or chili—" Angel murmured.

"I'm sorry. Guess I'm just like an old woman, telling you the same things over and over . . ."

"No, no, please! I like to hear about it. I wish it was now. Or I was then . . . or something."

But you become silent, because you know you've said it all before. And no matter how wistful Angel is, how nostalgic for a time she never knew, you couldn't possibly translate the *fullness* of it to her. The young can more easily imagine King Arthur's court than the youth of their elders.

And is it, anyway, only an illusion? *Your* illusion? You see those days

in their totality. All of those Saturdays. But there were other days in the week. You sat at your Monday morning desk, just as the others in your charmed and beloved circle sat at theirs. Or at their drawing boards, or in production lines, or waiting tables. And you should remember that your friends weren't always charming or a ways beloved. That there were jealousies and betrayals and hurts. That you were not always charming and beloved, and that, sometimes you, just as they, were temporarily outcast. But always, as they, redeemed.

And when you think of that bohemian kind of existence, remember that they were never really the free spirit, the amoral character you imagined you were. Confess that then, as now, a broad streak of prudishness ran through you. That part of you was untouched and untouchable, even as you rode along on the current of that youthful and unconventional circle. But that even that circle had a kind of code unknown to its counterpart today.

And so you lived in easy comradeship with your friends, and were untouched by passion. Until Kay. Kay, who came and cast the second pebble into the pool of your life, and altered the entire rhythm of your existence.

She appeared at Roger's on one of those Saturday afternoons. A summer Saturday. There was a kind of shine about her, a brilliance that rayed out from her tawny leonine head and confirmed itself when she began to talk. You were hypnotised. She walked you home through the warm, dark streets, and you sat in the Square awhile and talked. Quite possibly you were in love before she left you on your doorstep.

You went to concerts in the park, and after the second one, you walked hand in hand through a grove, and in the black, starless night, she stopped in the shadow of a tree and kissed you. You were eighteen, and it seemed you had waited a very long time for Kay.

O, but how had you remained so innocent, Julia? What invisible citadel did you occupy, impervious to the realities of love? Your imagination took you not much farther than that kiss. As far, perhaps, as the dream of a quiet room and you and Kay alone, and the two of you close and warm. The ancient dream of the infant. So that when your passion shocked and rocked you, you were child-like in your imperative need. The dream and the need had to add up to the fulfillment.

Only—it never happened. Never, never happened. What happened was a great deal more, and still, a great deal less. The night she kissed you, she brought you home and came up to your room. She took you roughly, hurtfully, into her arms. Her kisses were urgent and bruising, her hands compelling, never still. Then, on the very brink of an illumination never before perceived, she let you go. Loosed you from her embrace and said, "I'm going now."

You lay there, stunned and uncomprehending. The "Why?" is stifled in your throat. She kisses you, but gently now, and leaves.

And in another day or two she calls and says, "Come down. And bring your pajamas and stay over."

Your bath is a ritual and you anoint yourself as for a royal wedding night.

You pack your little canvas bag and fly.

You talk politely with her grandmother in the parlor of the huge old house, and then Kay takes you up to her studio bedroom and the door is closed. Then once more, with records on the phonograph, you lie together on her couch and she takes you nearly to the point of madness. You are waiting for her to say, "Let's get into our pajamas. Let's go to bed." But the hour grows late and then she says, "I don't think you ought to stay. Come, I'll take you to the bus."

Time after time after time. And you never spoke. You never asked her.

"Why?" And then, one night, she said, "I can't see you any more." And, at last, you asked her. "Why?"

She only shook her head and left you with your heart exploding. Days later, when you were sick with grief, she telephoned.

"I must see you. I can't stand it," she said. And you soared clear over the rainbow.

Three times, before she really stayed away. Twice she returned, the third time was forever. You were young. You grieved. But after awhile, you stopped. The juices of your love dried up, and you became once more spectator to the scene. You never were aware of the scar tissue forming, sealing away, driving into some dark, secret corner, the core of your womanhood. What remained was compelled in a direction safe away from the Kays of your world. You lived with what was left.

Angel sighs and moves closer to you. You turn your head, startled, and see that she has fallen asleep.

Let her, you think. Let her sleep, and in this way, time stands still, and for a small while you don't have to pretend. Her hand has fallen over yours, and the feel of it, for such a long time now familiar to you as your own hand, burns like fire. The touch is like the touch of a stranger.

You move ever so slightly away, so that there is no contact at all. Her physical appeal is still a danger and you know it well. She knows it, too. Had she anything to gain from it now, she wouldn't hesitate to use it. Just as Ron did. From Ron you learned where lay your Achilles heel. So many times, the cold and angry words, the final words you were able to speak on the telephone, went with the wind when she appeared. Her touch aroused not desire, but the release of the very emotions you wanted to restrain. Anguish, tears, and ultimate surrender. Not surrender of your body, for this was not the intent in her, nor the response in you. But surrender of your decision, and your pride.

This wouldn't happen now. Couldn't happen. Angel has no such hold on you. Her roots have never gone so deep. But a splinter underneath the fingernail is painful as a knife-thrust in the heart. This time, the most you would endure is the swift thrust—unanaesthetized by Judas kisses.

You turn so you can watch her face. The sandy lashes move just slightly

on her freckled cheekbones. The pale young lips are open and she begins to breathe the slow and deeper breath of sleep.

You look at her now as you did in the beginning. With awe and disbelief. As if to say, how has this elfin creature come to me? Look at her now, Julia, while she sleeps. It is safe now, to look and remember. To remember that this faun thing is only one of many guises. That close beneath that dryad masquerade there lies an infinite variety. That in her you have found the mother and the child. The tender and the ruthless. The awkward colt-and the passionate woman.

"You have made me feel like a woman," she said, in the beginning. "I never did before. I don't know what I've been--"

But she taught you to perform this miracle. Because she was young and ardent and not content to be lover alone. Because she shared with you all the little mysteries Ron had kept for herself alone. Ron, and those before her, but especially Ron, had bound you in the role of the beloved. Used you as an instrument on which only she was virtuoso. A silent thing, except as you were touched.

"It's wrong, baby," Philip said. "Something is missing. Love-making is a shared experience. Not an act perpetrated by one person upon another."

"What difference does it make?" You used to argue, out of your ignorance. "If she's pleased, and I'm pleased--We're the ones involved in it."

"All right. But you're short-changing each other, whether you know it or not."

Angel taught you the difference it makes. With the insistence of her youthful passion, she sloughed off your shackles and opened a whole new world. A world that both of you explored together. Where there was neither child nor mother, young nor old. Nor one teacher, one pupil, but both were both.

You think now, do I lose this, too? When Angel goes, does she take with her your new, free self?

But it hurts to think about it now. Just as you cannot allow yourself to think about her with Ilga. Sharing with Ilga what the two of you have learned together. . . .

When you get to this, you turn away and look at her no longer. You lie stricken for a moment, and because you know you have arrived on perilous ground, you rise quietly and leave the room.

To be concluded next month

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