

*L. E. Sauborn*

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Editor . . . . . SYLVIA MEYERS

Assistant Editor . . . . . WILLIAM WILKINS

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Staff Advisor . . . . . JAMES R. SCOTT, B. A.

Minister of Publications

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# A Christmas Carole

DOUG ODEGARD

The streets were crowded with shoppers and Marley was one of them. He was standing on the corner, waiting for a bus and holding a large package under his right arm. He almost dropped the package when he heard the blast of an automobile horn close by and the scraping of tires across the ice. Just around the corner a car sat straddled across the body of a young man, whose blood was running out onto the dirty snow. The parcels he had been carrying lay strewn along the gutter.

“Rough time to die, eh, Marley?”

For a few seconds Marley watched the scene in silence. Then he acknowledged the question. “Yes, Fred, it sort of makes you stop and wonder.”

Fred lit a cigar and watched them put the dead body on a stretcher. “Heading for home, Marley?”

“Yuh.”

“Care for a lift?”

“Gladly.”

The two men got into a late model convertible. As he pulled out into the street, Fred asked. “Why don’t you drop into the party at my place before you wander home? It’s still early and all the fellows from the office are there. They would like to see you,—you know, down a few for Christmas.”

“I’d like to, Fred, but Carole and my little girl Kay are waiting for me. I got this Panda Bear especially for . . . ”

“There’ll be lots of time for Panda Bears and your family later, Marley. A few good nips and a little merry-making will do you a world of good. How about it?”

“Well, maybe for just a couple of drinks, but . . . ”

“Fine. I’ll drop you off at my shack and then go finish a little business I have to attend to. The party’s in full swing right now, so don’t worry about formal introductions.”

The car stopped in front of a large, expensive-looking house. Marley and his Panda Bear got out of the car and entered the house. It was full of people, none of whom were sobre. Someone shoved a drink in Marley’s

left hand, shook his right one and wished him a merry Christmas. He finished his drink and the process was repeated.

Five handshakes later, a strikingly beautiful female wriggled her way through the crowd to where Marley was standing, "Hi, Santa, my name is Carole." She kissed him and she felt very warm and alive on his lips. "Enjoying yourself, Santa?"

"I am now. Where's your husband, Carole?"

"Laid out cold on the sofa. But let's forget about him and put your coat away—in the bedroom."

For a few seconds the thought of his daughter flashed across Marley's mind. But the thought disappeared when the door closed on the dark bedroom.

"You have the same name as my wife, Carole."

"Good, that means we have something else in common, hmm?"

"Hmm." The Panda Bear fell off the bed onto the floor.

A goddess named Adultery sat on the doorknob and filled the room with her laughter: a harsh smile on a very beautiful face. "Play, you proud and intelligent mortals. Scoff and laugh at the other animals as you drag your own chains up to the grave—and die with them!"

Marley left the bedroom without the Panda Bear. On his way to the door, the hostess met him and asked, "Have you seen Fred, Marley?"

"He said he'd be right back, Dora."

"Oh, fine. Did you have a nice time?"

"Very. Merry Christmas."

"Thank you. The same to . . ."

He was out the door before she could finish her sentence. His house was only a short walk from Fred's residence. So he walked.

The moonlight danced off a snowman in his front yard. He glanced briefly at the single cloud hanging in the sky, lit a cigarette and went inside.

A man's laugh greeted him as he turned the hall lights on. The cigarette fell out of his hand onto the rug. He recognized the man's voice.

This time the goddess laughed at him from the doorknob on his own bedroom. "Drag your wretched chains behind you, Marley, those heavy, wretched chains, and weep!"

The bedroom door opened and his wife stood there in a nightgown. Fred stood behind her, his arm around her slender waist. He looked at Marley with the same calm expression with which he had viewed the fatal accident earlier in the evening. Then he put on his coat. "Hope you enjoyed yourself at the party, Marley. Merry Christmas." He opened the door and left.

Completely silent, Marley stood in the living room staring at Carole. His stomach felt empty and uneasy. Finally she turned around, muttering, "He's a very strong and virile man, dear. Maybe I don't love you as much as I once did. Maybe you . . ." She closed the door.

"Look what uncle Fred brought me for Christmas, daddy." Little Kay ran up to him carrying a large Panda Bear. He lifted both of them up, gazing first at the bear and then at Kay.

"Will you tell me the story of the birth of Jesus again, daddy before I go to sleep?" He put Kay in bed, knelt beside her and began reciting the story of the Nativity. While deep below the surface tears flowed.

"Drag your wretched chains, Marley." The sharp immortal chatter of the goddess echoed through the tiny house. "Sometimes the forces of sex and death . . ." The rest of the statement was drowned out in a storm of hideous laughter.

And some people die a little sooner.



# Ooji-bong

ROBERT SIMMONS

Once, on a lonely little island far out on the blue Pacific, there lived a cannibal named Ooji-bong.

Ooji-bong was all alone on this island; he had been marooned there by the members of his tribe. Ooji-bong had eaten the chief's favourite wife and while the chief didn't mind this too much, (after all, she was getting old), still the proprieties must be preserved. At that, Ooji-bong had only been exiled, not eaten, so perhaps the chief was a little more grateful than people suspected.

Or perhaps it was because Ooji-bong was very stringy.

Ooji-bong was very unhappy on this island. He was lonely, and he was hungry. He was tired of talking to himself and he was tired of eating fish.

He used to dream about the old days with the tribe, of the jolly companions around the pot, and especially of the delicious aromas arising from it. Ah! The fun and food they had had!

And those other times, when he sat with his girl in the moonlight and the palms whispered softly overhead, and the surf boomed distantly on the reef, and his girl's soft arms were around him.

And here the saliva would begin to form in Ooji-bong's mouth. She had been a good girl.

As time went on though, Ooji-bong in his desperation would have welcomed even Glic, the skinniest man in the tribe, who, because of his prospects of longevity, had been appointed tribe historian.

But just as Ooji-bong was at his lowest, just when he felt he could no longer endure his existence and even was walking along the beach looking for a palm tree tall enough to hang himself on, there, right in front of him, washed up on the shore by a particularly large wave, was a poor little white girl.

To Ooji-bong she looked like an angel. Of course, she was a little skinny in spots but then, in others, she was very pleasantly filled out.

Very pleasantly.

And now Ooji-bong found himself in a quandary. Should he satisfy his terrible hunger, or should he keep her for company? He was a very lonely cannibal. He was hungry too.

For a while Ooji-bong vacillated, but the problem was too much for him. On the one hand his cannibalistic craving drove him on; his mouth watered even as he looked at her. On the other hand, if he satisfied his craving, he would once more be lonely. He certainly liked having her around.

For the first time in his young life, Ooji-bong was learning the sad fact that you cannot have your cake and eat it too.

Finally, Ooji-bong decided not to decide, at least for a little while. She wouldn't spoil and she might get fatter.

Ooji-bong spent a pleasant week.

The little white girl spent a pleasant week also. Ooji-bong was very attentive; he saw that she had lots to eat, and she was flattered by his obviously admiring gaze. As a matter of fact, this handsome protector of hers never took his eyes off her. Not suspecting Ooji-bong's ulterior motives she basked in his gaze and ate his food. After all, she reflected, being shipwrecked wasn't as bad as she had heard. In fact it wasn't bad at all.

Then the idyll was rudely shattered. She awoke one day to find Ooji-bong approaching her with a gleam in his eye, a knife in one hand, and a napkin in the other. Ooji-bong was always a neat eater.

She screamed and ran behind a palm tree. Ooji-bong sighed regretfully; it was going to be difficult, as usual.

In fact, Ooji-bong was surprised at how much regret he felt. He really felt sorry for this little white girl. Why, he hadn't felt this badly even when he'd eaten his first girlfriend back in the good old days with the tribe, and he'd had to share her with three other suitors.

Of course, there had been other girls then to take up where she left off.

Ooji-bong almost faltered in his purpose, but the sight of her was just too much. She was just too pleasantly filled out. Also Ooji-bong had never tasted white meat; it would be interesting to try it. Ooji-bong sighed and began to chase her around the palm tree.

And here Fate stepped in and gave the little white girl a hand. As Ooji-bong ran around the palm tree a coconut was jarred loose and fell on his head.

The little white girl looked at her fallen idol and wondered what to do. There was always Ooji-bong's carving knife, of course, but she, not having been raised a cannibal, and rather liking Ooji-bong—he had been rather nice to her—hesitated to go to such extremes. Besides, she hated the sight of blood.



If there were only some way to cure Ooji-bong of these lamentable lapses of hospitality. Cannibals could be such nice chaps when they tried. She had figured out by now that Ooji-bong was a cannibal. The napkin did it.

She thought of hiding out on the island and reducing. She thought if she were scrawny he wouldn't like her so much, but no, if cannibals don't like someone they eat him even more quickly than someone they like.

Perhaps if she distracted him when he woke up by playing on his other instincts and emotions. No, it would only last a week. Even a cannibal can have too much of a good thing.

She must find some way to be both attractive and unattractive to Ooji-bong. What a problem for the cosmeticians!

Then the perfect solution hit her.

There was no time to lose. Ooji-bong would wake up soon. It hadn't been a very big coconut.

The little white girl went to work. She got an old rotten coconut and broke it open. She pored some of the rancid juice inside over her hand.

Then Ooji-bong awoke. For a moment he stared dazedly around and then his glance fell on the napkin laying by his side and he remembered—dinner. He saw the girl a few steps away and with a bound he leaped after her.

Then the little white girl did a surprising thing; instead of running she stood her ground and as Ooji-bong ran at her she thrust her hand right into his mouth. Ooji-bong, never one to bother cooking a gift hand in the mouth, bit. Immediately he unbit. He did more. He loosed a curdled shriek and with a mouth squeezed up like a lemon-sucker bounded for the spring and plunged his whole head in.

Never had he dreamed that white meat could taste so foul.

The two were completely reconciled by evening. They sat under a palm tree and watched the sun go down in the Pacific sea, and, as the wind whispered through the palm trees, Ooji-bong looked tenderly at the little white girl. Not a bad thought entered his head. He was cured of eating human flesh,—at least, white meat.

—Which all goes to show that even when a cannibal reforms, a woman has her hand in it.

# The Island

CARMEN T. DE CASTRO

**W**hen Nadine woke up she had a strange feeling; a morbid feeling I might add. She looked depressed, almost tired. If you didn't know Nadine, you would have thought she was an idiot; she looked like an idiot, when she was feeling morbid; nevertheless, she was not an idiot, she was just feeling morbid.

She got up and dressed slowly, saying nothing. I kept on reading in bed; soon I would be going to the University for my English class. I was accustomed to her strange moods.

When she talked she looked at me in that manner which I knew was the introduction to her other world.

"I went back last night," she said.

"Stop your nonsense," I replied.

"I did, you may not believe me, but I did. I went back to the other world last night. You were there too, but you didn't recognize me. You couldn't, because you don't know me there, but I have a special gift and I can know you."

"That obsession is taking hold of your mind, and it'll soon take hold of your senses." Such conversations made me nervous.

"Please don't say that Giselle," she whispered, "I know that when we go to sleep, we're only waking up in another world, therefore we're never at peace. The trouble is that when we wake up in this world, we don't remember that we have gone to the other world. As a matter of fact, we don't remember anything of the other world until we have returned to it the next day or the next night. Don't you understand?"

"And when we're in the other world we don't remember this world. Isn't that how the story goes?" I knew the tale by heart. "But then, what's the point of saying that you went back last night if you go back every night?"

"But you don't understand, I don't remember every time, only some times. You see, last night I was crowned."

"So you're the queen of the Island now. And what happened to your father? Did he die?"

“Yes, and there was a big funeral, and afterwards I was crowned.”

“Your father wouldn’t like to hear that he was buried,” I joked.

“Giselle! My father in this world is not the same as the one I have in the other world.”

Soon after I left for my classes. I was in my last class when I realized that I had been thinking of the other world almost continuously. Why not? Why couldn’t it be possible? But how could she prove it? No. Yes, it could be! But how?

When I arrived at the apartment I found Nadine crying.

“What’s wrong now?” I asked.

“John broke up with me, he says I am crazy; he even threatened to report me to the Dean.

“The fool!” I was annoyed.

“And, that’s not all. I was talking to one of the kids in the religion class, and she said I was talking heresy, because there couldn’t be two gods, and that I could be excommunicated.”

“Why can’t there be two gods?” I asked.

“There’s only one God, Giselle!”

“Maybe your god is the same as the other god, but with a different name.”

“No,” she said quite convincingly. “It was a different god. It was made of stone.”

“But then it wasn’t real.”

“It was, it is. I saw him talking.”

“O Nadine, I will believe you, in spite of everything I will.” I couldn’t bare to see her cry. I’d rather convince myself that her story was true. Besides, it would keep my mind busy.

“What am I in the other world?” I asked.

“You are my enemy. You are in love with the man that has been assigned to marry me, besides, you are wicked.”

“Nadine!” I exclaimed.

“Yes! Yes! You have even tried to kill me.”

“What if I do?”

“I’ll die in this world too.”

“Nonsense!” I shouted. I was ready to believe her fairy-tale, and there she was, calling me her enemy.

“Don’t call it nonsense,” she shouted back. “It is true. I don’t care if you don’t believe me, I don’t care if John calls me crazy, I don’t care if they expell me from college, or if I’m excommunicated.” She looked sick, mentally sick.

She ranged from hysterical laughter to sobs. It annoyed me. Then she stared at me in a very strange manner. I shivered, I was scared, and yet... I couldn’t get my eyes away from hers. There was hatred and fear and disgust in those eyes. I could even hear my teeth chattering. Then she smiled perversely, and said:

“Don’t talk to me anymore!” I couldn’t answer; I couldn’t even move, not until she had left the room.

I decided to leave the apartment at once, live elsewhere. Lord! Nadine was near to or already insane. But I didn’t move out, I couldn’t. Whether I was hypnotized or not, I don’t know; but I couldn’t move out.

Two weeks dragged by. Nadine behaved as if she were an automaton. She drank coffee all day long, skipped classes, and took sleeping-pills every night. I was too scared to let her parents know, to let any one know, as a matter of fact.

My mind must have been pretty mixed up then; to leave the apartment was a relief, but I had to come back to it. It was a living hell.

That night I was very tired when I hit the pillow - my head was turning around and around, and I felt cramps all through my body - my legs ached, and all my muscles, as if I had been running for miles and miles. It must have been around midnight, and I didn’t know whether I was awake or asleep, but I was on the Island. There was the god of stone, gigantic and bare. It was a strange sensation. Then, I saw Nadine, she had a crown on her head, and her eyes shone in a strange manner. Next to her was a man, strong and young and he had a knife hanging from his neck. I hated Nadine then, and I ran, ran to the man, took the knife away, and jabbed her right through the heart, I felt the knife going through her skin and flesh—it was a frantic pleasure...

Then I heard a scream, a scream which I will never forget! Nadine was lying motionless—blood was running on her breast, red **living** blood. The knife was still in her hand—it was the **same** knife!

# The Unknown

BILL WILKINS

“**A**nd on your left - if you look closely - you can see the tomb of Josie Allington. See? - through there. In her day she was the most famous madam in New Orleans. They say that . . . .”

As he listened to the guide's story, he studied the reactions of the other tourists in the jitney. Beside the driver, the couple from Kansas listened in open-mouthed amazement. The other two passengers in the back seat looked down their delicate up-turned Boston nostrils at the story-teller. He leaned back and smiled inwardly. Fancying himself a collector of personalities, he enjoyed observing the contrasting types of his fellow tourists. Nick, the guide, was now explaining to the Kansans that no one **living** within three miles of the **cemetery** could be buried there. He laughed along with them as twin flashes of insight struck the couple simultaneously. Pulling out a gold-plated cigarette case, he offered its contents to the others. Nick being the only taker, he clicked the case shut, lit his cigarette, brushed a few ashes from his Brooks Brothers suit, and sunk into **revery**.

. . . .that was quite a look I got from those two from Boston..you'd think there was an eleventh Commandment forbidding smoking...I'd like to see them after a couple of high balls..I bet that would break down their wall of phoney sophistication . . . look at them staring out of the window like dowager empresses giving their subjects a treat by allowing them to gaze upon the royal profile...it's a wonder they don't wave graciously at the peasants...they've hardly spoken to me but then they haven't said two words all afternoon..oh yah, there was that brilliant remark of the one next to me to the Kansan's attempt at friendliness..“Oh yes, Kansas, that's where they grow all the wheat isn't it?”...oh, brother that ended any further attempts at communication..c'mon girls, let your hair down and let's live a little...I certainly hope I have more fun here than they do...but I won't have to go much to beat them...wonder what there is to do here...nobody knows me and I can do anything - well, almost anything - I want to..no restrictions, no nothing..I'm completely on my own for a change..the folks won't worry..they'll think I stayed in Houston a few extra days after Paul's wedding..can tell them when I get back that I took a short vacation..need one after those spring finals..Houston's too close to New Orleans to pass up a visit..especially when I have so much money left over anyway..if the folks don't like it, it's too bad..it's about time they realized the Victorian era is over..hell, why worry about

it..I don't even have to tell them when I get home...they'll never know.. didn't even give my right name and address at the motel..**nobody** knows me and I can please myself...say, **she's** alright! I wonder...

Suddenly he sensed that he was being watched. Looking up quickly he caught Nick's stare reflected from the rear-view mirror. The guide's eyes were captured for only a split second then shifted back to their natural setting. Funny, that was a piercing look that Nick had given him. He immediately dismissed it as a product of his imagination...Or was it the sign of his own guilty conscience?...

"There's the Huey Long Memorial Home folks, and just down here always is the Sugar Bowl Stadium."

Nick's monotone, a mixture of French and Dixie accents, again awoke him from his thoughts. He joined in the ensuing conversation, commenting on the various points of interest.

"We are now entering the Vieux Carre".

The hot Louisiana air wafted in the open window as the car pulled over to the curb and stopped. The tour through the French Quarter fascinated him. The sights and sounds of yesteryear came crowding into his imagination. There was Jean LaFitte organizing his pirating excursions in the old Absinthe House. Now a Negress in colorful calico undulated slowly across the street hawking her pralines. Here a landau was pulling up and then the gentleman in top hat and frock coat helped the ladies in their flowing crinolines. There in the patio two lovers sipping lemonade and watching a pet monkey scurry behind the lace iron grill work of the balcony overhead. The air itself was filled with the harsh cries of the auctioneers still echoing from the old slave block.

The tour ended in a small gift and souvenir shop. As he was looking over their assortment of high-priced merchandise, Nick detached himself from the pillar on which he had been leaning in front and strode up to him.

"Well sir, how did you like the tour?"

"Very interesting, — but I think I'll have to come back and take my time looking around."

"Yah, you cain't see it all in a couple of hours."

"Say Nick I was just thinking. You look like a man of the world and I don't know anybody here, so how's about giving me the lowdown on what there is to do for excitement in this town."

"I think you'd enjoy our night club tour. Yuh can't say you've

seen New Orleans unless you've seen it after dark."

"Well that wasn't quite what I had in mind."

"I kinda thought you were looking for something more than sight-seeing. I was young once myself y'know. But if you really want what I think you want I can fix you up with sumptin' pretty nice." Nick made appropriate gestures in the air. "Listen you come with me on the tour tonight and I'll have it all arranged afterwards."

"..uh..it's a deal."

He pulled out his wallet to pay for the box of pralines he had been holding. A thick roll of bills beamed becomingly out of its compartment.

"Say kid, don't yuh know yuh shouldn't carry so much cash around with yuh? It's not safe!"

He lay on his bed in the motel waiting for Nick to pick him up. He still couldn't understand why Nick wanted him to go on the tour first instead of giving him the girl's address. Of course Nick had told him that it was for his own protection. Strange things happen sometimes in the Vieux Carre. He contented himself by dwelling on his rendezvous and assured himself that it would be worth waiting for. He had been a trifle hesitant at first but he soon reassured himself. After all it was a strange and romantic place, he had lots of money, and he had nothing to lose. Besides it wasn't the same as if he kept these midnight trysts all the time. As a matter of fact this was the first time he had embarked on such a venture. He had often imagined what he would do if he was ever freed from the restrictions imposed by his surroundings. And now the time had come! This had been the deciding factor - he was completely free because he was completely unknown. Headlights swept across the darkened courtyard and his heart leapt for he knew it was time to go.

Deadly monotony overcame him as the party moved from one club to another. Each one was almost the exact duplicate of the one before - the watered-down whisky, the low-grade comedians, in fact, the entire physical surroundings had lost all trace of individuality and seemed to have been obtained from the same molds. Even the strippers - which had first excited him with a promise of things to come - became nothing more than a steady succession of painted, brightly ornamented puppets on a string. He silently cursed every interminable second he was forced to spend making small talk with the other members of the party. He vaguely wondered what the two old girls from this afternoon's tour were doing for fun tonight - probably gone to a illustrated lecture on the life and work of Audubon. Stepping out of the door of the last club an audible sigh of relief escaped him. This was what he had been waiting for. As he walked to the car the

blatant jazz streaming from the cafe doors jangled his senses and lent added steam to his emotions.

The other tourists having been deposited, the jitney finally arrived in front of its destination. Leaving Nick with instructions to return in a couple of hours he advanced on the heavy ancient wrought iron gates. As he pushed the gates open and stepped into the courtyard he was dimly aware of the car pulling away - the sound of the motor diminishing rapidly. The moon above shone brilliantly making a beautiful counterpane of the patio. A gentle breeze, laced with the sickeningly sweet scent of honeysuckle, made the banana trees against the wall wave an enticing greeting. He imagined he was repeating a scene from the past - a young gentleman calling on his charming southern belle on a gentle Louisiana evening. It was as if time had been held captive in this charming setting for all these years. He laughed aloud. He felt more like one of the notorious Blanche DuBois' lovers. He wondered if this place was anywhere near Desire Street.

The numerous Daiquiris consumed during the course of the evening favored his first impression and he reverted to it. The drinks not only added to the illusion that he was reliving the past but also served the purpose of relieving him of the last vestiges of inhibition. A flush came to his cheeks - the forebearer of excitement that only the neophyte adult pursuing such a mission can know. "If the boys at Cornell could only see me now!", he thought. If his parents could only see him now! He shrugged this idea off. They would never find out...after all, he told himself for the fiftieth time, how could they?...he was unknown here!

Circe waved her magic wand and robed in the spirit of adventure he started up the stairway. His heartbeat had become a roaring crescendo urging him on and on. The restlessness created by the long wait in the night clubs made him tremble slightly. He could feel all the pent-up passion and emotion surging closer and closer to the surface of his consciousness. Soon...soon.

The ancient wooden steps creaked under his weight as he made his way to the landing. A faint amber light streamed through the window and spilled in a soft pool beneath it. He knocked gently and the door swung quietly open! A voluptuous body encased in a diaphanous white gown blocked the entrance!

Suddenly a loud creak and as he whirled around a figure materialized out of the surrounding gloom brandishing a long black object. A short struggle, the thud of the weapon hitting the floor, a flashing blade of silver from nowhere, a sharp pain in the chest, and he was floating in an all-pervading black haze. He looked up to see the white gown blowing



crazily in the breeze. Alabaster arms reached through the obsidian towards him and then the circling whirlpool completely closed in, sucking him down and down into its spinning vortex.

Nick pulled the touring car up to the entrance of the cemetery. As the tourists inspected the above-ground burial system of New Orleans the portly caretaker approached Nick.

“Another scorcher today, eh,” he commented as he removed his panama and industriously mopped his greasy forehead.

Nick nodded in agreement.

“Just finished a messy job,” he continued. “Some fishermen found this guy in the Gulf and brought him in this morning. Nasty business, he’d been stabbed and rolled.”

“Do you know who he was?” queried Nick, showing the first signs of interest in the conversation.

“Nah, he was pretty badly decomposed after being in the water four or five days. Could still see the knife wound, though. His wallet and all his identification were gone. Even his watch and cuff links had been taken. He was well dressed too. Had to bury him in a hurry, they don’t last too long in this heat and humidity. Too bad too, I guess nobody will **ever** know who he was.

Nick turned silently and slowly retraced his steps to the car. Sickening thoughts returned to plague him...robbery yes...but murder..... didn’t mean to kill him...why did he have to put up a struggle?...didn’t want to kill.....



# Of Apes and Men

D'ARCY LUXTON

DEDICATION: To Unclaimed Relatives

## — CHARACTERS —

The Major	Mr. Tremens	Helpful
The Doctor		Hopeful
	Retched	Mildew

Time: Now or then. A meeting of the "Society for the Suppression of Resurgent, Uncivilized Peoples."

Scene. A door on which is lettered, "1st Commando Corps. H.Q." and behind that door a spacious room containing several chairs and their occupants. One wall is covered with blueprints of the environs which are labelled "Alien Territory." The rest of the room is normally furnished except for a pile of wooden drill rifles in one corner.

In another corner, Retched, an unhappy man of no outstanding qualities, physical or otherwise, sits on a chair facing the wall. Above the rumble of conversation about the room, he can be heard counting the hairs on his head, a habit of long standing. He, like any sensible man, daily takes inventory of his assets which are constantly disappearing due to the visits of pilfering devils and furies who at night take great pleasure in stealing hairs from his increasingly bald head. The others view this idiosyncrasy with undisguised amusement. None of them thinks very highly of Retched's intellectual powers.

By his side, watching with unseeing eyes, stands a disintegrating figure of humanity. Mildew is neither deaf nor dumb but speaks not a word and appears to hear nothing. Undistinguished except for the fact that he wears both pants and shirt backward, he is considered rather odd by all his companions including Retched.

Opposite the door, against the wall wherein is set the only window, two gentlemen are engaged in a furious argument. Mr. Tremens, constantly disturbed by gentle vibrations and massive shakes between which regularly occur spasms of magnificent violence, is the very picture of perpetual motion. He is now engrossed in delivering an oration on the positive virtues of opening the window a half-inch from the bottom and (for some unknown reason) a quarter-inch from the top.

He is opposed by Helpful, whose greatest fault is his abominable

cheerfulness and his annoying interjection of unwanted remarks. He is an exponent of the theory that with the window opened one inch at the bottom, one not only receives plenty of fresh air but also avoids unnecessary head colds.

Into this comparatively peaceful realm, steps the Major. He quickly settles the argument by ordering the lower window raised three feet and the upper lowered three feet. This brilliant solution carried out and the windows having passed each other on their journey to opposite poles, both Mr. Tremens and Helpful are satisfied and there is no opening whatsoever. Another demonstration of the Major's administrative ability having been accomplished, he smiles to himself as he passes up and down before the door. With his swagger stick rhythmically tapping reachable objects around his circuit and with a misconduct sheet clutched lovingly under his arm, he is the picture of a contented man. The Major is a robust fellow of forty odd years, imperialistically inclined and ruler of this, his small domain. He has enrolled all occupants of the room in his commando corps and is mightily feared by his neighbours down the hall on whom he conducts periodic raids. Each morning at six the Major puts his roommates through a disciplined drill (for which the wooden rifles are used) and during which his swagger stick gains acquaintance with numerous arms and legs - not to mention skulls. This enforced conscription does not make him a popular co-habitant and he is cordially detested by his draftees.

All at once the tappings of the dreaded stick are heard no more. Voices trail off into silence and Retched temporarily discontinues his counting. The cause of this unnerving silence appears to be the diminutive gentleman who has just entered the door. He is a sour faced individual in tweed jacket and pyjama bottoms. He is obviously a man of some importance.

The meeting is about to begin.

The Major: "Gentlemen,

Order, order! - cease to speak. Pay attention this way. Mr. Tremens, observe a reverent silence if you please.

Today we are honoured with the presence of our guest speaker from 2nd Wing West who has volunteered to inform us on the outrageous conditions now prevalent in his beloved birthplace, in Africa.

Without further ado, I give you Doctor Lemon - squeeze." (A single hiss greets the diminutive gentleman as he climbs atop the chair placed in the middle of the room for his benefit and resting his

notes upon the improvised lectern, stares with apparent sarcasm on the tumbler and pitcher (but no water) which stands beside him. The audience waits for him to speak. His suggestive looks at the pitcher are unavailing.)

The Doctor: "Thank you Major.

I account it a great privilege to address the House, once more, on a topic of the most imminent danger to ourselves and the world at large."

Mr. Tremens: (recognition flaring in his eyes)

"Why do you have to stand on my chair? Why didn't you bring your own? You might break it."

The Major: "That's enough Tremens. He's our guest you know."

Retched: (disinterested, returns to his counting)

"80, 81, 82, 83, 84 . . . . ."

The Doctor: (aside) "Peasants!"

"From my old county of Barnum in Africa, I have been informed, in a vision as it were, concerning the astounding resurgent activities of the apes in that area. It has been reported that the apes have, of necessity, been granted the vote in view of the fact that they now own almost all of the banana industry."

The Major: "Come now Mildew, pray don't swallow the door knob. We shall never be able to get out if you do. My word, such children, all of you!"

Retched: "127, 128, 129, 130 . . . . ."

Helpful: (face enlightened by an immense discovery)

"Apes! Ridiculous! Apes owning the banana industry. They don't grow apes in Africa, nor bananas for that matter. Grapefruit maybe, but not bananas."

Retched: "Dr. Lemon - squeeze, are these apes orangutangs or gorillas?"

The Doctor: (aside) "One intelligent man, the rest are berserk."

"May I answer the Honourable Member by saying that due to the intermingling of both sorts they are, in fact, called Orangorillas."

The Major: "You may."

Mr. Tremens: (seizing a chance for intellectual assertion)

"Honourable member! House! House!"

The Doctor: "Conditions have become so serious that four of the county council and the Chief Magistrate are apes at this very moment and in

the coming election they are expected to gain complete control of the government. In spite of the drastic measures taken by local authorities, this reprehensible situation has reached its peak in the intermarriage of apes and humans."

Retched: (having dropped a stitch)

"1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, . . . . ."

Helpful: (triumphantly)

"Naturally the offspring of such alliances are called Orangorillahums."

The Doctor: "As a matter of fact Mr. Speaker, they are called Orangorillamen."

(Helpful sits down, miffed.)

Mr. Tremens: "Mr. Speaker! Honourable member! House! House!"

The Major: (tapping subject in the stomach with his swagger stick)

"Don't hold your breath, Mildew. Breathe out man. That air's ours as much as yours."

The Doctor: (aside) "Surly crowd - I should never have come."

"The resurgence of these beasts has become so progressive that public washrooms are now labelled **His** and **Hairs**."

(Unnoticed at this time, the Major stands thunder-struck, his eyes bulging in their sockets and his moustache quivering. He rushes over to the wall and feverishly examines one of his war maps, then, grabbing a wooden rifle and bellowing like a bull, he violently throws open the door and takes off at a run down the hallway. The rest are turned to stone by this awesome display of power and stare at one another with absolute amazement. In a matter of seconds the Major returns, followed by screams of terror and cries of dismay somewhere along the corridor. Mission accomplished! The meeting re-adjourns.)

Hopeful: (now mollified)

"Would you bring an ape, preferably an Orangorillamen to our next gathering so that we can discuss the matter with more intelligence?"

Mr Tremens: "Standing on my chair with his big, dirty boots!"

The Major: "Don't cry Mildew. We've all done that at one time or another."

(The Major, though out of breathe, appears normal.)

The Doctor: (aside) "Fools, Fools!"

"In answer to that question I might say that the apes cannot leave the country because they refuse to be fingerprinted by the British government. There is no doubt, of course, that the presence of apes in this

assembly would raise the average intelligence considerably.”

The Major: (apparently listening for the first time)

“Nobody but an idiot would go halfway 'round the world to interview a damned ape.”

Mr. Tremens: “Honourable member! House! House!”

(Points an accusing finger at the Doctor.)

“He's a Resurgent!”

The Major: “Quick. We'll vote. Not your leg Mildew, your arm!”

Helpful: “Vote! Vote on what?”

The Major: (beating Helpful on the back with his swagger stick)

“We always vote. You know that.”

The Doctor: “Damned savages!”

Mr. Tremens: “My chair!”

(Tackles the Doctor - the chair falls and a scuffle ensues.)

An Attendant dressed in white enters the room.

The Attendant: “Ready for your shock treatment Doctor. We'll start with you this morning.”

(The combatants unwind and the Doctor leaves with the Attendant.)

The Major: “Shut the door Mildew. It's our air you know. No need to let it run around outside.”

(The door shuts.)



# *The Office Clerk*

F. M. M.

*Pecking out a dry life  
Mindful of spaces  
Bright blue light and burned out eyes;  
A staccato symphony—unfinished  
And processing clean white sheets.  
Pigeons, flags, dust and calendars;  
“Shortbreads today” and sour cream;  
Bullion and radiators—base metals both  
A static cog in a dynamic economy.  
Excelsior, bah!  
Freckled and grey at the Fountain of Youth,  
Unexplored fathoms; sand through the fingers  
Whirling, swirling, a vortex of nothing  
Incoming, outgoing, incoming.*

# *A Summer Afternoon*

ANONYMOUS

*To live again the sun, the moss,  
The gentle rock, the waters edge;  
To feel again the closeness and the peace—  
To feel my all, thy all, and all be one,  
Nor dare to stir for fear it leave.*

*To have been free to live it on—  
With oft-considered fulness,  
And oft-known knowledge;  
But we can never, we can never,  
Never.*

# *The Condensed Incoherent Ravings of a Frustrated Fool*

JOHN COOK

*My head throbs constantly  
With thoughts of you incessantly  
Pervading my mentality  
Constantly, incessantly,  
Perhaps even permanently  
I will dream of you,  
I will pray for you,  
I will hope for you  
Perhaps similarly you  
Will dream of me  
Will pray for me  
Will try to be----  
But, what the hell!  
What was has passed,  
And I'm here to tell  
Of now, for it won't last.*

## *A Tribute*

DON GUTTERIDGE

*Death, like the unchecked surge of a tidal flood,  
Whose liquid fury dashes all before  
Its mortal path, and drowns all hope of life,  
Now swims its deadly course, dyed in blood,  
Through Hungary's riddled, ravaged streets, to pour  
On those true hearts pestilence and sordid strife.*

*A Tyranny, more truculent, more cruel  
Than the savage hordes of Ghengis Khan, or the ravage  
Of the Black Death that reigned in ages past  
Has struck that land, but only fed the fuel  
Of freedom that shall persist despite the savage  
Russian sword -- to the edge of doom shall last.*

*And though they perish 'neath the Russian bane,  
In death, liberty is yet their gain.*



# Contemplation

MASASHI KAWASAKI

*Into the silent unknown dark  
The path of the curve, the brawny curve  
Turned voluptuously down  
From the soft neck.*

*Enticing it continued  
And slid under the uprising curtains  
Waiting to be caressed  
Waiting, waiting . . . .*

# A Valid Ballad

ROBERT SIMMONS

*A valid ballad is this lay  
An ancient truth it doth purvey;  
And one that still rings true today,  
So learn the easy, not hard way.*

*King Arthur, by his steed conveyed,  
From a hilltop saw a maid  
Threatened by a dragon's raid,  
So Art charged down to render aid.*

*As Art drew near this scene so dire,  
He saw the dragon breathe out fire,  
Whose hot steam made the girl perspire,  
Though chills in Art it did inspire.*

*But thoughts of fear were swept aside  
When the damsel Art espied:  
This maid was worth a rescue ride:  
Her long gold hair was loosely tied,  
Her eyes were blue, King Arthur sighed -*

*And almost yielded to the lure  
To snatch a kiss; she'd not demur -  
How could she, facing death for sure?  
But no! King Art was just and pure -  
"The dragon first!" cried brave Arthur.*

*So with the noblest "Tally-ho!"  
Art raised his lance and off did go,  
Full tilt at dragon's fiery glow,  
His courage to the maid to show.*

*And just one detail damped the scene-  
The dragon looked both mad and mean;  
But Art was brave, as t'will be seen:  
His knees knocked not the horse between.*

*Art thundered on; then came the clash.  
Art's lance plunged home--a mighty slash;  
But dragon's breath struck like a lash,  
It singed Art's beard, and raised a rash.*

*King Arthur, stricken, cried "My beard!"  
"My hero!" then the damsel cheered,  
And Arthur, strengthened, persevered  
And soon he had that dragon speared.*

*Though with its blood he was besmeared.  
Proud was Art as turned he to  
The maiden to collect his due;  
And sought a hearty buss or two,  
In gratitude for aiding who.*

*But Art ne'er clasped that pulchritude;  
Instead Art found himself eschewed--  
The rescued damsel thought him crude,  
And, since she was no more pursued,  
Poor Arthur found no gratitude.*

*And thus King Arthur was outclassed;  
But, we can profit from the past,  
So, lest ye find your pass is passed  
Because her gratitude fades fast,  
- Kiss The Maiden First - Not Last.*

## *A Dali Dream*

JOHN COOK

*Ah! The solace of drink;  
Life is not alive but a Dali dream.  
The senses shout and the soul doth shrink  
'Till essence is carnal, existence is spleen.*

*The Devil rides high on the fiery vapour  
Humming and strumming and numbing the nerves.  
Perception is darkened with heightened desire  
For more cloud-raiser and more ever more.*

*Existence of future harries not the bleary gaze.  
Past is back, fuzzy and fogged, veil without rent.  
The present is in focus as a beam thru the haze,  
Frayed ends, wavy forms entangled in the moment.*

JOHN COOK

*Alas, alas, as I stroll past  
My heart is filled with sorrow;  
For though this day I cannot pay  
Perhaps I will tomorrow.*

## *Musical Query*

WARREN McBURNEY

*Why does a harp  
Sound so much  
Like its sophisticated cousin  
The harpsichord;  
When it's merely a dude  
Of an upended grand  
In the nude?*

## *To Premier Nasser*

TERRY LEEDER

*Vast and solitary, there upon  
The desert's barren floor great Cheops' tomb  
Slowly sanded down by time, but yet  
In main still there, stands. Silent stood  
Great men in ages past and viewed this pile  
Of stone, this slowly wasting tomb. There first  
Great Cheops viewed the pile, the Ptolemy, too,  
Noble Caesar and grave Napoleon  
And now another man. Mere men and states  
In quick succession fall and all in dust  
Their fleeting glory lies; this tomb itself  
To ages slowly bows its weathered head,  
And crumbles piece by piece. One day the sand  
Shall sweep across the barren plain where once  
In pride man raised his puny monument.*

# *Impression: Les Ponts de Paris*

PATRICIA ROBINSON

*Misty moon washed shapes slowly  
Glide their arches  
Over the silvered Seine, while  
Under the bridges is quiet-  
Quickness of life lulled  
To the gentle murmur of  
Liquid on stone.*

*Dark is there-  
    Dark of emptiness,  
    Dark of peace.  
And above, glare of lights  
Sifts, softened, through  
Skeletal, spider-leg branches,  
Webbing the stone,  
Weaving the still-flowing waters  
To teardrops of light.*

## *Night*

WARREN McBURNEY

*The world lies asleep,  
dreaming under its eiderdown of white.  
Above, the moon,  
like a phantom ship,  
seeks shelter on the cloudy shore  
of some distant continent.*

*The trees, rocked in the wind,  
try in vain to moor it,  
throwing it gnarled cables.  
Not long enough,  
they fall short of the mark,  
and splash in shadowy ripples  
on the snow.*



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