



M O S A I C

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EDITORIAL

A WORD ON OUR COVER In historical Christianity, the greatest of the human figures God has chosen to build his Kingdom among men have found themselves confronted by the problem of integrating love of learning and love of God. Yet through the centuries it has become apparent that only in the union of these two is the fullness of man to be attained, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually. Without this union, both learning and piety are sterile, but such a union is indeed difficult to attain, it is a cross, a perpetual contradiction, an inescapable paradox, above all, a mystery.

The cross on our cover assumes a double perspective for its viewers. For those who have never, or have not yet, resolved themselves to the perpetual journey which is the search for truth, it is a crumbling cross, the disintegration of their own vital capacity to love God who is the Truth. For those of us who have resolved to renounce the security of selfishness, the suppleness of this cross becomes the symbol of that freedom by which the sons of God seek to become more like him in both knowledge and love.

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Fred checked his watch. It was 12:15. He had another fifteen minutes in which to decide the matter. Unable to concentrate on the correspondence before him, he allowed his thoughts to drift back over the past eight months.

Was it eight months? Yeah. It had been the night of the Winston conference. Everyone had gone, and he had stayed behind to locate the original draft of the plan he had proposed. Unable to find it in any of his files, as a last resort he had thought of checking his secretary's wastebasket. Sure enough, there it was. Crumpled in with the plan had been a letter--written in a cramped hand--addressed to his secretary. Curious, he read the personal letter. It was brief and to the point. Apparently the author had found Miss Connaly's name in a Lonely Hearts listing and was attempting to strike up a relationship. The autobiographical sketch furnished by the author had revealed him as a lonely pathetic figure.

"Christ," he thought, "at least the idiot should have had the sense to try and make himself interesting." He didn't blame Miss Connaly for pitching it into the wastebasket. Then the idea occurred to him, at first more as a joke than anything else. If she was desperate enough to have to look into that sort of thing for love, he would bring a little joy into her life. "After all," he thought, "it's good for the business too. If she gets a little love in the mail she'll perk up and do a better job around here."

The next day he had written the first letter. It was a masterpiece. He addressed it to her box number, and rented a box of his own for a return address. Like Walter Mitty, he had invented a dashing character, perhaps a little overdone, but, nonetheless, effective. Her reply had been surprisingly well-written, and, he thought, she laid it on a little herself. Let's see, he mused, she claimed she was 27. That's three years on the low side. That business about being an actress working temporarily as a secretary had been downright fantasy. Checking her personnel file he discovered that she had been with the firm since she was nineteen.

As time progressed, the letters became more and more intimate. He thought it would be over when she suggested that they exchange photographs, but, luckily, he had found an old squadron picture in the family album. His own face was indistinguishable unless pointed out, so he had circled one of the other smiling faces

and sent it along, rating that it was from his service in the Korean War. God, would she have been surprised if she knew it was from World War II.

What about the time Emily had almost found one of the letters in his pocket? That had been close! Sweat came to Fred's brow as he recalled the incident. Usually he kept the letters locked in his desk, with a carbon copy of the letters that he was sending. Somehow, he had forgotten and taken one of her letters home. Emily had been emptying the pockets of his suit before she sent it out when he recovered it from her--Thank God--before she reached the inner pocket. What would Emily have said? Could he have explained it as a joke? Somehow he couldn't see Emily's frigid personality accepting the matter. Her absolute lack of humor still appalled him, even after twenty years of marriage. It had been one of those hasty war marriages, and to this day Fred regarded it as an Axis victory. That's the way to lower the boys' morale, have 'em marry frumps, he thought.

And what about Miss Connaly--Grace? The effect of the letters had been incredible. Even some of the other fellows around the office had made comments. From a quiet, nondescript woman approaching spinsterhood, she had become a damned attractive person. First it had been the new hairdo, then exciting perfumes, and finally, a svelte wardrobe. Her personality, he decided, had blossomed out as well. And himself?

God, what irony! The joke was on him. He had told so many lies that it was impossible to level with her now. She had always been, as far as he was concerned, just another piece of furniture around the office. Lately, he couldn't get her out of his mind. Whenever she was around, he was acutely conscious of her. What would she do if she knew that he was her correspondent lover? She could never accept him. Fred knew it. He was twenty years older than she was, and those twenty years had wrecked havoc. Balding, decidedly a few steps beyond the portly stage, the only place that he could function as a lover was in his thoughts. The first thing that she was likely to do--if she ever found out--was to quit. That would be a shame, for she had become an excellent secretary, in face, a right arm to him. Why the hell had he ever agreed to meet her for lunch anyway? Well, sooner or later things would have to come to a head. He had never been sure whether he would keep the appointment or not, and although it had been two weeks ago, and reason argued against it, he was still undecided. What time was it? 12:30.

What if he didn't keep the date? Perhaps he could explain it

and ease her off slowly. In any event, he knew that it was going to be a helluva disappointment for her. She had been visibly excited all morning. Perhaps he could sort of accidentally drop into Antonio's and discover her. No, dammit, he was caught in his own trap. The only thing to do was to forget it. What about the rebound? Maybe he could cushion the blow for her, act in a fatherly way, and gradually ease it into a personal relationship. No, he ruefully sighed, he didn't have the nerve for it.

"Fred?"

He looked up, startled to see Grace still here. Then it dawned on him--she had called him Fred.

She smiled. "We're supposed to be having lunch today, remember?"

* *

A STREAM RUN WILD

by Bro. Rene Roy fms

What do I do to a stream run wild?
Do I tunnel it under the ground
And hide it from view while it erodes
And eats away the gut of my land?
Do I bury it with earth and rocks
Till it is covered by a mountain?
Do I stop its flow with a stone dam
That yearly must grow in height and breadth?
Do I pray the north wind to freeze it
Into a cold, hard, forbidding wall?
Do I blast a deep hole at its source
And dry up the spring that gives me life?
Do I run away to escape it
Only to find it right behind me?

Or do I build a sluice and lead it
Into my mill to turn its great wheels?

* *

There are many dissatisfied people walking our streets, occupying our offices, hustling along our college corridors. Some are indifferent to life--passive--some are violently much ado about nothing. Some are confused, and their actions indecisive. They all have this in common, though--they have no sense of purpose or cognizance of life's meaning. As Thoreau puts it, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." How, one wonders, with so many avenues of thought, love, exercise, perfection available, can a man allow such a condition to exist?

A partial answer is to be found in the modern man's, the modern student's, loss of that vital sense of personality and personal relationship which is the root of his happiness. When a person experiences that sense of emptiness, of unfulfillment, of dissatisfaction with himself and his life that few can adequately describe, let him look inward rather than outward, let him search for a meaning, an explanation within himself, not in a new philosophy, human situation, or job. The situations of modern living, the life of study for example, are no less satisfying, objectively speaking, than the situations in which our ancestors lived. The answer lies with us, and hopes to be uncovered and given recognition--that we may truly live.

The act of communication, the interpersonal relationship with our neighbor, is at the heart of our happiness, regardless of circumstances. When a man projects himself outside of his own self-centered, isolated, existence, outside of his enclosed ambitions, fears, and anxieties, when a man reaches beyond himself to touch the world of another man, and when that other man responds with an equally disinterested reply, the act of communication is consummated, the personal relationship is inaugurated. This is what the modern Jewish mystic and philosopher, Martin Buber, calls dialogue, the "I-Thou" relationship. It is at the center of our happiness. It is the act of fraternal love.

To make such a communication, to approach someone thoughtfully, sincerely, requires what Teilhard de Chardin calls "consciousness." We must have sat down with ourselves and considered what we are, what we live for, what our goals are, and how other people fit into our lives. Some people never do this, and a haphazard, sensually directed, unmotivated, and unhappy life results. To live consciously, Chardin says, one has to look

at people and things and activities in their metaphysical perspective--in their meaning in terms of our nature and our goals in life. To live consciously means to be aware of as much of life at once as possible, to be aware of the integrated, interrelated, nature of all of our experience, to be aware of the meaning, totally speaking, of what I am doing now--this minute.

When we are truly conscious of ourselves and of our environment, we have a sense of personality, of uniqueness, of individuality, without which a real relationship with someone else is impossible. For how can I give something of myself to someone else (to someone other than myself), how can I receive something from another, when everyone else, everything else, is only a kind of protoplasmic extension of myself--having no real identity apart from my recognition of it? Isn't this the way most of us live? Aren't most of our actions directed to the enthronement, the success, the pleasure, the recognition of what we call "Self"? Aren't the words of others, the friendship of others, the very persons of others, only given attention and consideration when self-aggrandizement is involved? Even our acts of charity, if analyzed, often betray some ulterior motivation. Dr. Halde, in William Golding's latest book, Free Fall, tells Samuel Mountjoy, a representative enough modern individual:

Yes, you are capable of a certain degree of friendship and a certain degree of love, but nothing to mark you out from the ants or the sparrows.

Mankind is not an entity, an indissoluble mass. It is a group composed of individuals, unique and approachable. When we treat each person individually, when we try to discover the warmth, the thrilling mystery, the illuminating truth within even the most obscure and unattractive of our fellows, we are on the road to satisfied living. When we stop treating people as machines, and even begin, in our factory-orientated, mass-orientated society, to treat machines as persons, we shall have found the long-coveted philosopher's stone.

Erich Fromm, the noted psychologist, sketches modern unhappiness, along the lines of alienation, of isolation, from one's environment, from God, from one another. It is in overcoming this alienation, in an achievement of union with each other, with God, in the accomplishment of a communication--of Buber's vital "I-Thou" dialogue--that happiness becomes visible on the horizon. The thoughtful human touch, the almost physical warmth of a person who cares, the exhilarating experience of really loving some-

one and of being loved; more abstractly, the joy of the inter-personal relationship: herein is meaning; herein is life.

Samuel Mountjoy, in Golding's Free Fall, realizes, after having lived the modern's "full," "successful," "rewarding" life, that he had been deceived. He decides that:

The substance of these pillars (on which the world order rests) is a kind of vital morality, not the relationship of a man to remote posterity nor even to a social system, but the relationship of individual man to individual man--once an irrelevance but now seen to be the forge in which all change, all value, all life is beaten out into a good or a bad shape.

The effort involved in achieving consciousness, in striving for intelligent, loving inter-personal relationships, is not insignificant. We have first to contend with what Thomas Merton calls, our "false selves." This is the self that deceives us, the self that presents reality out of context, the superficial self that shows us the pretty cover without permitting a discriminating glance at the contents, the self that portrays life as a succession of pleasures and satisfactions and recognitions to be anxiously sought, revelled in, and discarded, the irresponsible self that unfortunately guides the lives of many of our status-seeking, relativist, sex-absorbed human beings.

We have secondly to realize that loving, that meeting one another and communicating with one another in action, is in Erich Fromm's words, an "art," not a natural response. Loving, like any art, requires discipline, concentration, practice, and patience. Above all it demands a vibrant realization of the "brother-brother" relationship which breathes forth Christ. It takes this discipline to single out an individual from the amorphous, dizzying mob stalking our modern college corridors, and to look into his eyes for the truth, the love, that will set both free. "As I have loved you, so you love one another."

* *

Once in a star-heavy night
that glittered with darkness
and throbbed with quiet,

I arose from my bed with tremblings
of fear
at the cold that moaned in the stillness
and stood alone,
before the moon that shared my lot in the sky,
stood and felt it bathe the forest
with the spirit of light
that laughed beneath the pale moon.

I stood and breathed silently,
the pulses of my life within
beating rhythmically in
limbs distended in the ghostly light,
limbs distended by the touch of beauty
into quivering strings made to
echo and resound in the hollow
of the rounded earth below.

But the strings were not touched,
nor did they resound,
and the pain of their tension
could only pitch a shrill thin
scream angrily at the serene
moon that glistened above on
the waves of the stars.
'The silence sang a melody
to the moon
for it alone,
and no mortal ear might hear
the dread harmony of its secret creation.

Disjointed I stood,
painfully entangled and unseeing
in dissonance with the smooth
harmony of the whirling orbs
that murmured liquid beauty
in full-mouthed flowing words.

* *

There are those in our time who, although it comes as a shock perhaps to realize, are of such a maturity and have thought so deeply that they might look on the writings of the philosophers who are being studied with difficulty even now as we generally look on the philosophic writings of the ancient Greeks, recognizing the authenticity of the grains of insight, but viewing the rest as rather quaint and naive archaisms; who have insights into human nature that will not reach the mass of men for another one hundred years. They have learned to recognize that there is a constantly expanding dimension of the mind of man that makes him essentially the same and yet permits a flexibility of change and maturation of his psyche almost limitless, and this is why they are rather retiring. The change seems to come through certain men whose greatest urge is to think and to explore the possible. The results of their thought gradually leavens the mass of men whose level of existence is thereby raised without their knowing it. Herein is recounted a quiet account of not one but two people who perhaps thought in this manner precisely because they were together as man and wife, and a third who thought because he was very much alone.

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If it weren't for this one friend of theirs, John, they would probably have passed as plain people, but his friendship and occasional presence at their home tipped the balance of public notice, and people, especially their close neighbors, began to be uneasy about them. Actually if the neighbors had really known the couple well they would have been either extremely pleased or very angry that they lived there at all. There were no un-thought-out lacunae in their lives, no mediocre commonplaces.

They rose at five-thirty in silence broken only by a smile, sat back to back in the morning stillness on comfortable cushions where the sun would soon flood through the windows and meditated in a simple oriental position for half an hour. Then they broke the silence to dress for the day. He left for work shortly afterward, attending Mass on his way. She sent the children off to school. He worked as a master craftsman on a seven hour day, and she kept house. It was as simple as that. But when he returned home they began to live again on a different level. If they were to go out in public they dressed down, but there was a certain dignity in their

bearing that set them off, and when home, their clothing fit the harmony of the house. To be in their company was to feel as if you were speaking to a single person of great wisdom, so well did they complement one another and agree on essentials. To hear them discuss an uncertainty or a detail on which they might have slightly disagreed gave one the impression of being within the mind of an erudite person weighing a question privately. After one knew them long enough one became aware that there was a difference between their contact with other people and the way they lived by themselves. If guests came they used fine but not ostentatious silver and china that resembled what almost everyone else used. But when they were alone as a family they used a service composed of various pieces of striking individual beauty that they had deliberately chosen for their almost vision-producing effect, so that one came to realize that even the simple actions such as eating were given a transcendent touch through the grace perhaps of an Italian glass pitcher setting off the rugged elegance of a simple ceramic dish, or the translucent glaze of Chinese tea cups.

The landscaping around their home appeared in good taste and would equal the better property anywhere in the country area where they lived, but the area secluded from general view had been transformed with much ingenuity and little money into a scene embodying the intellectual vigor of the European formal garden yet with an even more pronounced oriental character.

To find one of them sitting lost to the world in the garden might have made it disconcerting to realize that he or she knew more about the mechanics of the process of mental absorption and visionary experience than most people, and that they were both still spiritually mature enough to enter into it subjectively even though possessed of this much objective knowledge about it.

They read widely about a tremendous variety of subjects and kept a fine library of modest size. They were both musicians and loved to perform with their children.

It was quite natural that John would be attracted to this couple since he also had an interest in many different things, was quite sensitive aesthetically, and loved fine music. They had met casually and he, being single and having more leisure, called on them occasionally. Their conversations sometimes lasted well past midnight, and gradually, as they came to know each other better, came to center around the subject of the relationship between the mind and the physical brain, recent research findings in the psy-

chromatic and biochemical fields, and the use of drugs in psychiatry and psychology. It soon became apparent that John was, to some extent, preoccupied with this field for a very personal reason. He was in a very real sense an addict, and yet his addiction was not to a drug, but to nicotinic acid, a substance that has been found to counteract the effects of a psychedelic drug such as mescaline, peyote, or the recently synthesized lysergic acid.

As a child, John had been of above average intelligence and perfectly normal by all standards except that he seemed somewhat more enthralled by the color of bright objects such as his toys, or sunsets, or Christmas trees, and especially flowers. His teachers mistook his fascination with flowers as a leaning toward the realm of botany, and the peculiarity went unnoticed. He was well within the limits of conventional behavior, but the tendency for the biochemical imbalance present in his system to take him into visionary, trance-like, states, became stronger and stronger as he matured. At sixteen his mother noticed it easily, but mistook it for day-dreaming since he could, though with considerable effort, recollect himself at this stage. It did not disturb him particularly--partly because he had never been scolded for it as a child--partly because he was actually not aware of what was happening to him. But at eighteen he realized that the phenomena was getting out of hand and he was hesitant about driving a car because of the unpredictability of the onset of the distracting visionary experience that now produced visual sensations of beautiful strong colors, breath-taking enhancement of natural objects, and penetrating insights into the nature of Being per se. People began to notice his sudden distractions and, though he was slightly apologetic at times, friends began to be distant and drift away. His parents insisted he see his family doctor who in turn, puzzled, sent him to a neurologist. Fortunately the neurologist was an alert man who was well versed in the latest developments in his field, and he tried large doses of nicotinic acid, explaining that it was, although sounding harsh by name, an element of the vitamin B-complex which might help. The immediate results were gratifying. The imbalance was corrected and the experiences stopped. But at twenty, John had an even more difficult problem. The large doses of nicotinic acid he had been taking for some time were beginning to produce undesirable side effect, and yet he knew from experimenting that stopping the doses meant the return of the visions which by now, regardless of how beautiful and profound, were so strong as to completely hinder normal activity while they lasted. He had managed to get through two years of a good college with good marks, but the June eve of his sophomore finals marked a new turn of events. He had been studying

hard, and as he went to supper he found himself worrying that he might be distracted by an experience during the exam the next day. Perhaps it was the heat of the abnormally hot day draining more than the usual amount of salt from his system or the anxiety of the worry that he knew objectively was largely unfounded, but that night, although he had taken his prescribed dose, he went into a visionary trance as he was dozing off, and this time it was a nightmarish hell of brutally garish lights and sensations of diabolical consciousnesses attempting to force entry into every opening of his body. By some supreme effort of will he did not scream or cry out. Two hours later he rose from the drenched bed and staggered down the deserted hall clutching a blanket around him for warmth and plunged into a hot shower. The water soothed him somewhat and he returned to bed and slept a pitiable, exhausted sleep, rolled in the blankets.

It was the next day after he had struggled through the exam that, ironically, a new acquaintance broke the heady news to him over coffee that he had been invited by some upper classmen to join in a group experimenting with mescaline. He told John that it had been a religious-like, deeply moving though difficult to articulate, experience, and that he was seriously considering joining an off-campus group which had become so enthused with the visionary drugs as to make them a sort of ersatz sacrament in a quasi-religion, claiming that a person's behavior, and even his life, could be changed by their use. The friend was unaware of John's condition and hinted that he might be able to get John invited to the hushed-up activities. He minimized the faculty's cool reception of such things and the danger of unpleasant results. He never knew why John slowly put his head in his arms and only after a long, painful silence raised his face with an expression that could have accompanied tears or laughter.

It was soon after this that John, after a chance meeting at a Christmas party, gravitated back to their home. They had sensed while talking to him that he needed something that they might give and spoke almost simultaneously of it on the way home from the party. He spoke earnestly of half-formed ideas born of his own struggle seeking knowledge and insight. They soon realized that he did not need help in the form they first intuited for they recognized immediately that the experiences he spoke of more and more freely were, at the same time that they were plaguing him, forcing him to think deeply about his mind and to read everything he could lay his hands on about the visionary phenomena. What was lacking was the overall view of the matured mind. At their home he was getting just that. Although one might assume that his

main preoccupation would be how to rid himself of the experiences, it soon became apparent that he only wanted to be rid of them to the extent that they would not interfere with his normal activity, and so that he could shake off the necessity he felt for the controlling drug, nicotinic acid.

They were sitting by the large circular stone fireplace that filled the center of the living room talking over a glass of port when he stated a fact that brought about a conversation that can only be put into the category of rare because during it were stated concepts and facts that summed up and crystallized much of the thinking of these three who had providentially come together.

"I was attending a class today on the Romantic poets," he said, "and it struck me that evidently the thing that happens inside my head is what must have happened to some of them, and particularly to Wordsworth who had to wait almost agonizingly for it, to sort of work himself up to it for the conditions to be just right. Not that he went about it like a yogi or dervish, but he did seem to have a tendency to fall into it easily in a mild form, just through stimulating adventure. Do you remember the time that he wrote of--when he was hanging over a cliff's edge stealing birds' eggs? Even then he got a glimpse of it as a child does. But later on the transformation of natural objects and surroundings must have occurred and his preoccupation with light gives him away. I thought at first that he never got them as strongly as I do, but then I read the poem where he mentions the experience of being so absorbed that he was oblivious to external things and felt a not unpleasant lassitude about all things, and I realized that it probably was no coincidence that he was the most emotionally unstable of the great romantics. He was enamored of the ecstatic experience and was disturbed unless the conditions obtained that promoted it." As he said this he looked hesitantly at his friends as if not quite sure that they would understand.

While he had been speaking the older man had been gazing into the snow covered garden outside the window. When John stopped speaking the alert eyes moved suddenly to a sharp focus on him, and after a moment's hesitation he said, almost as if he had been all through the same thing and was simply continuing what John had begun "It seems quite obvious to me that there are certain people who are physically more prone to ecstatic visionary experiences than others. Your case is an extreme example. It is evidently a biochemical factor that scientists know little about yet, but the research of those working with psychodelic drugs does show that it can be chemically induced at will and that the at-

mosphere, the surroundings, and the mental state of the subject are very important for a pleasant rather than a hellish manifestation of the drugs effects. Speaking of the Romantics: it would seem no accident that Coleridge took a vision-producing narcotic even though it was habit forming and led to his ruin. I think you are right about Wordsworth too. The only thing I can add is that it would seem that the ecstatic experience, the visionary tendency, is modified by the incompleteness of his psyche which, one might say, has to grow as his body does. This is probably why in the child it is a more heady, emotional, thing, and in the more mature, a more abstract, intellectual phenomena. The modern research results would seem to prove the fact revealed by Freud's investigation of the unconscious. The psyche would show itself to be not the soul and not the brain, but an intermediary ground between the two through which information passes from the physical brain to the spiritual soul, the intellect. This would seem to open up the possibility of a much more profound understanding of man's evolution. After all, we can see pretty well that, and how, his body evolved, yet the theologian finds it difficult to accept the evolution of the soul as such even though an intellectual giant such as Chardin seemed to be theorizing in that direction. However, if we consider that along with his body, it was simply the psyche that was becoming more developed, was evolving in conjunction with the purely physical part of man, even perhaps in a directly dependent way, then the question seems resolved. If the pioneers of psychoanalysis could mistake the psyche for the soul, it seems reasonable to assume that the anthropologists could also. It seems to me that it will not be too long before the language and some of the concepts of St. Thomas Aquinas--though not the basic thought--are going to seem as antiquated as the words of Aristotle or the Egyptians. I think too that our present concepts and terminology about sanity and even sanctity are going to be outmoded in short order as we come to realize that they are of a much more fundamental unity than we would perhaps like to admit and that even this unity is part of a greater whole that is man's total make-up and his relationship to the total universe. Man is realizing that not only is he in a process of evolution, but also that he is aware of it more and more and that the creative activity which is the only worthy activity of his leisure is the deliberate furthering of the evolution of his psyche, individually and collectively. Man is now quite obviously master of at least a part of the direction of his own evolution and in most of the disputes of history in religion, philosophy, and science, and now especially in the field of psychology, the disagreement is over the direction to take, and we see difficulties arising as the pattern begins to repeat itself. It is regrettable that so much lack of contact and understanding are

always present."

Realizing that he had been speaking at some length, although his young friend had been listening raptly, he stopped and glanced at his wife as he rose to stir the glowing embers of the fire. His wife was a graceful woman of great maturity and poise, whose face was that of a person whose thinking gave her a look that was almost a radiance. She smiled and added with a touch of sadness in her voice: "What seems to cushion the series of shocks of new knowledge and yet, at the same time, slow down the process the most is the tendency we all have to compare ourselves with others. When we reach a certain age we can easily be satisfied with the degree of intellectual growth we have attained and just become so pleased with ourselves that we don't have any desire left for the growth that comes with new ideas and greater synthesis of knowledge."

John sat silently for a moment lost in reflections that made him smile slightly. "You know," he said, "the other day, a friend of mine began telling me about some people who were so enthused about psychedelic drugs and their effects that they were beginning to make a sort of religion out of their use as ersatz sacramentals. I certainly should feel as if predestined to heaven! I read up on it a little and I found out that there is no salvation under their system for those who have a bad liver or heart! Do you think there is anything to their use?"

"Well, it would seem that they have a limited use in psychotherapeutic work. The effects are too ambivalent to permit a very free use of them. Perhaps they could be used by a person after he had completed psychotherapy so that what he knew objectively could be made subjective by the almost electronic change of "set" in the cortex that might give him a positive predilection for constructive, psyche-expanding, experience, and ultimately, God. I think that the experience is essentially, basically, the experience of the artist. It's not the experience of the saint in infused contemplation, for, after all, you can't force God to grant something of any sort."

And so the conversations went on for one or two visits afterward. But on the occasion of his fifth visit for a casual chat, the unfortunate occurred. John visited, and then left around ten o'clock. As he walked down the street from their home, he was suddenly overcome by a surprisingly swift attack, if one might call it that, of vision, and it unluckily happened by the only house between theirs and the main road back to school. He fought it

violently, but found himself irresistably drawn to the tiny, lighted greenhouse at the side of their neighbor's house, entranced by the vivid red blossoms of a large plant just inside the moist pane. The neighbor's wife was terrified to see the figure looking intently through the glass as she went to snap off the light before retiring. He was still entranced with the profound reality of the beauty of the blossoms when a police car slid to the curb without siren or flashing lights, and two officers accosted him. Fortunately, the neighbor had called his friends to warn them of a "proowler," and they had immediately guessed from the fact of the greenhouse who it might be. They offered a logical explanation and the strength of their integrity prevailed. He was released, although the officers were a bit incredulous.

The incident gave them serious concern. About two days afterward it suddenly occurred to one of them (it always puzzled them afterwards which one of them had thought of it first) that if the unknown element in the physical makeup that produced ecstatic experience, whether effected by a biochemical imbalance due to one's physical makeup such as John's, or induced artificially through the causing of this imbalance by drugs, or caused by the action of God directly in the soul, or even by a stroboscopic light in a laboratory flashing before one's closed eyes, could be pinpointed and defined, then something might be done for him. Rather methodically then, they began consulting with friends in the academic and scientific fields who might throw some light on the problem. It was soon apparent that science had gone not quite far enough to offer a solution. They were abject. They had known John but a relatively short time, and yet they had a great regard for him. They had not spoken of their efforts to John, and the futility of their search made it seem well they hadn't. When he came unannounced a week later they expected the worst. What they encountered was something they had not expected and which was a tribute to their being what they were. Instead of the hollow-eyed dejection of a despairing youth, they met a man. John came into their home that day with a look of confidence and peace. When they asked what had happened, he grinned and said, "I began thinking about your describing the potential we have for determining, in part, our own evolutionary direction. It became apparent that perhaps the existentialists had perceived this as their basic insight, yet mistook the psyche for the soul just as Freud had, and, having posited that "being precedes essence," they considered the soul, religion, and God to be denied. They seem to extend the principle to all levels of being, and perhaps this is true to some extent in that it gives a better understanding of the workings of consciousness on all levels. But that seems rather unrelated to

my feeling that I've found the solution to my problem. It simply showed me, almost accidentally, that what I had to do was practice a sort of Yoga, a system of mental self-discipline in reverse. Up until the other night when the police found me, I had tried to push the remembrance of the experiences out of my mind, and struggled against them only when they came upon me. It was somewhat like the person who resists temptation to sin only when faced with the immediate occasions, and doesn't bother helping himself at other times, doesn't practice asceticism, or meditate. So I realized that perhaps a systematic, quieting practice of daily mental discipline might help. For the last week I've been practicing only the restful Yoga exercises that I had learned some time ago out of mere curiosity. Instead of practicing the concentration exercises exactly in the prescribed fashion, I project my attention outward instead of inward, striving for a more alert attention to everything. So it worked, and I think I've got it licked. I pray better because I'm not always plagued by the thought of something happening. I can study normally. I even experimented yesterday with a little less medicine, and it works so far. You're great people.

* *

A WORD ON EUGENIC STERILIZATION

by Bro. Paul
Furlong fms

When we read the account of creation in Genesis, we are struck by the simplicity of God's designs. In the beginning, Nature's mechanism was essentially simple. Subsequent civilizations would take on the job of filling in the complexities. The gropings of intellect and spirit would come to expand a social life. But this very expansion would go beyond Nature's original structure. Nature, says Bergson, intended that men should beget men in order to preserve the species. But intelligence, in "outwitting" Nature, found a way to divorce the sex act from its normal result. In other words, it found a way to "refrain from reaping without foregoing the pleasure of sowing." In this we recognize the subtle combination of another human faculty, the will, in producing an act that affords man satisfaction. Bergson, again, tersely analyzed this tendency when he said, "there is a genius of the will as there is a genius of the mind, and genius defies all anticipation."

My purpose in this brief article is to probe into the nature of one of these acts of "genius" on the part of man, at the same time

asking certain questions regarding the situation in the future. Eugenics, then, is the topic involved, and more specifically, the efficacy of the practice of eugenic sterilization.

The study of eugenics analyzes those social factors which improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations. The eugenicist is interested in controlling those hereditary factors which determine the quality of the "stock" produced. Heredity, as we know, has a great deal to do with the characteristics and ethnic qualities of various racial groups as well as those elements in our personal make-up which distinguish us from others. Obviously, this admits a wide gamut of variables in the human race. By controlling the hereditary factor at its source, the eugenicist claims he can guarantee a certain perfection and unity in the human family at large. Thus he would have only that superior element of the community which bears the superior gene do the propagating. The defectives, or bearers of inferior gene, would not propagate.

On the surface, this is a neat solution to the whole problem. But, viewed realistically, it involves further complications, and at bottom shatters the mirror or moral custom reflecting generations of culture. The practice of eugenics necessitates, first of all, the practice of sterilization--a sterilization not motivated by therapeutic intentions, and thus unacceptable to Christian ethics. Also, since society is merely a functional whole existing for the good of its members, compulsory eugenic sterilization violates the natural law by invading the physical, integral, unity of the citizen's body. Beyond this, the eugenicist has the problem of setting up norms for distinguishing superior stock from inferior stock. And, of course, he must contest the objections raised by society's perennial traditions of matrimony.

The eugenicist thus seems to hold a rather untenable position. Perhaps this is so. At least, the Christian ethic denies it room in its system of values. In place of birth control, and sterilization (whether eugenic or contraceptive), the Church advises conjugal chastity, and demands absolute continence in the unmarried as a means of providing for the continuance of a pure race. Notice that the end for both is the same--the perfection and stability of the human race. But, with St. Paul, the Church condemns those who "do evil that good may come from it." (Romans 3:8) However, the Church, as Father Conway says, "separates the chaff from the wheat" in the matter of eugenics. It condones prevention of "mental defectives of the lowest grade" from marrying, but questions the justice of eliminating all "defectives" from the act of propagation. And it sanctions vasectomy and salpingectomy

operations where there is sufficient therapeutic reason. In addition, the Church is quick to caution against the materialistic "happiness now" attitude inherent in any code of eugenic sterilization.

Positively, Holy Mother Church defends the sanctity and dignity of the married state as the accepted and appropriate means of fulfilling God's command to "increase and multiply." In his encyclical letter Casti Connubii, Pius XI clearly and concisely states the Catholic position in this matter. Speaking of the dignity of matrimony, the Pope reminds us that

... not by man were laws made to strengthen and confirm and elevate it, but by God, the Author of nature, and by Christ Our Lord by whom nature was redeemed, and hence these laws cannot be subject to any human decrees or to any contrary pact.

His Holiness further points up the benefits flowing from the indissolubility of marriage as being good both for the married couple, and for the welfare of human society. Stability in matrimony, he says, is a source for stability in the State of which it is a part. Reading between the lines, this says a great deal about the individual, how he should look upon his marital contract, and further, how such a thing as eugenic sterilization can affect him personally. Continuing, the Pope warns of the error inherent in the assumption that the generative power is grounded in nature itself and has a wider range than matrimony, i. e. that it may be exercised both outside as well as inside the confines of wedlock. Referring to the use of compulsory eugenic sterilization, Pius XI remarks that the state grants "to itself a power over a faculty which it never had and can never legitimately possess." The mistake here, the Pope says, is in placing the State above the autonomy of the family.

Punitive sterilization is also disputable. It is generally observed that the end intended by such a practice is ultimately frustrated. For, the one who is made sterile as punishment for his crime is, in effect, enabled to seek inordinate pleasure without worrying about the harmful effects that may follow. Obviously, sterility will not banish the desire for sexual intercourse, but it may remove any fear of inhibition resulting from the possibility of conception.

Thus it is clear that the Christian ethic relies upon the decrees of Divine law, and upholds the principles of the natural law "derived" from it. (cf. Summa Theologica, II-II, 64, 5; 65, 1) It

allots to matrimony the legacy of perpetuating humankind, and dis-favors man made attempts to thwart Nature's designs.

But, science enters the scene, and inserts its own code of values. In furthering the cause of evolution, as Sir Francis Galton remarks, man "may use his intelligence to discover and expedite the changes that are necessary to adapt circumstances to race, and race to circumstances." Thus, the question arises, "How far may man intervene in Nature?" The whole history of drugs and antibiotics, of new advances in medicine and science have recorded the results of man's attempt to grapple with and control the forces of nature.

In a recent article in Catholic World, Father Owen Garrigan remarks that we must "distinguish nature as it really is from nature as it is known or discoverable by man." Man knows the changeableness and mutability of things, a mutation compatible with the immutable designs of God's plan. But "the nature of things," as a sign of God's unchanging will, is not an unchanging sign.

Father Garrigan notes the successful experiments of artificial parthenogenesis with lower animals (e. g. Loeb's experiment with sea urchin eggs). He evidently considers it within the realm of possibility that parthenogenesis could be demonstrated in higher organisms. In fact, Father Garrigan remarks that "it would be dangerous to deny a priori" such a possibility in the future. From this has arisen speculation concerning the question of ectogenesis-fetal growth outside the mother.

In 1932, Aldoux Huxley envisioned a Brave New World in which "viviparous" reproduction would be a thing of the past. Eugenics and dysgenics would be practiced systematically. Superior sperm would unite with superior ova in one set of bottles producing, or "decanting," Alphas and Betas. Another set of bottles would contain inferior ova fertilized by inferior sperm. Such systematic breeding, Huxley speculates, would resolve the chaotic and unregulated character of our present breeding.

Huxley argues from the practical point of view and desires that which will benefit society as a whole. Yet, he is also conscious of the moral problem involved: that the pursuit of good ends does not justify the employment of illicit means. What, for example, would be the limitations on the formation of "sperm banks" as currently advocated by Professor H. J. Muller? Since man is a knowing creature, to what extent has he the right to make use of his

knowledge of nature to further his own ends? And, to what extent may he experiment with nature in order to increase his knowledge? Questions of this sort are being asked by scientists and churchmen in the light of new discoveries. But, until more evidence is made available, and weighed in the context of the Church's teaching, we must agree with Mr. Huxley that "we are on the horns of an ethical dilemma, and to find the middle way will require all our intelligence and all our good will."

* *

A STORY

by Adolph Allers

George Baron shielded his eyes from the light, peered out of the station window, and watched the fine snow flakes dance in the strong wind. It was dark outside. From the dim glow of the light that lit the station overhand, George couldn't tell whether it was still snowing or the wind was just whipping the fallen flakes into the air. Farther out near the tracks, the small goose neck lamps over the platform were almost obscured. George walked to the ticket window and looked out into the waiting room. It was twenty minutes after nine by the clock on the far wall. The room was empty except for Willie, who was fast asleep on the bench in the far corner. His stained felt hat shielded his eyes from the lights that hung from the high ceiling, and his dark brown hands lay in his lap. He still had on his old army shoes. He didn't usually take them off until all the evening trains were gone. George turned and walked to the desk that stood against the dingy green wall. He picked up one of the telephones. With the other hand, he quickly pulled a cord out of a switchboard hole and placed it in another marked "dispatcher." He waited for a moment to make sure the line was quiet, then spoke.

"Hello Archie?"

There was silence for a second, and then a voice said, "Yeah George?"

"How's nineteen tonight?"

"Well now," paused Archie, "She's right on time. How's the weather up there?"

"It's blowin' pretty good. Quite a few roads will be drifted shut by morning. Doesn't look like I'll have to flag nineteen for anybody tonight."

"No, probably not," drawled Archie.

"Okay then. Thanks, Archie."

When George hung up he looked at the clock again. It was nine twenty-five. This time he picked up the city phone and started to dial. It rang twice at the other end, and then a feeble woman's voice spoke.

"Hello?"

"Hello, Sarah, do you feel any better?"

"Oh," she said slowly, "a little better. Do you think you'll be home early tonight?"

"Well, I just called Archie at Plains Junction, and he says the nine-thirty-nine will be on time, so I oughta be able to get out of here by ten o'clock."

"You'll be careful drivin', won'tcha? They say the wind is makin' it drift so."

"Sure Sarah, I'll give you a call just before I leave, okay?" Not waiting for an answer, he continued. "Now you relax, and don't worry."

"All right," she said, "don't forget to call."

"Okay, I won't. Bye." He replaced the receiver in the cradle.

He heard a sound at the ticket window and turned to see a gray haired woman opening her purse. "Can I help you, ma'am?"

"Yes," she replied in a quiet, slightly tired voice, "one way to Milwaukee, please."

George raised his white eyebrows. "This is a bad night to be makin' a trip like that."

"I guess any night can't be too bad if you're goin' home."

The woman wasn't alone. Standing at her side was a pleasant looking lady with graying brown hair almost covered by a white woolen hat. Next to her, holding a small suitcase, was a man of swarthy complexion with a fading black mustache. "Is the ninety-nine on time," he asked.

"Yes, it is," said George as he pushed the ticket out to the woman. "That will be \$41.25." The gray haired woman laid down a dollar bill beside the two twenties, and then began to search her purse for change.

"I've got a quarter, Mama," said the woman standing beside her.

The gray-haired woman adjusted her glasses as she said, "Do you think the weather will make the train late getting into Chicago?"

George chuckled as he picked up the money. "Well, it might, but I guess the weather don't make much difference if you know where you're goin'."

The lady smiled back at him as she put the ticket in her purse. "No, I guess not." She turned to the lady with the white hat, and guided her to the nearest bench.

George glanced at the clock. It was nine thirty-four, and almost train time. The last few minutes had slipped by quickly. Hurriedly, he stuffed his feet into his overshoes and grabbed his coat off the back of the chair. At the office door, he paused just long enough to lift his felt hat from the top of the filing cabinet and pick up the green and white battery lanterns that stood in the corner. Closing the door behind him, he stepped out into the waiting room. When the older woman saw him, she slowly got up, assisted by the man with the mustache and the lady with the white hat. Together they walked to the door that led to the tracks. At the doorway, George pulled his hat down over his white hair and looked off into the distance. Only a few small, scattered house lights pierced the darkness.

"Louis," said the old lady, "perhaps you can bring the family out to see us on your vacation."

The man smiled pleasantly as he said, "Well, Mom, we'll have to see how things look in the spring. Now Mom, you be sure to tell Papa not to work too hard, and stay off that bad leg when it bothers him."

She chuckled slightly. "I'll tell him, but you know your father."

George glanced at his pocket watch. It was nine-thirty-nine. She should be coming soon if Archie is right. Then he saw the bright light off in the distance that could not be mistaken for anything else. Far away like that, George knew the train was going pretty fast, yet to watch it pass along the countryside, it appeared to be hardly moving. When the train started into the last curve before reaching the station, George opened the door and stepped out into the snow. "Here comes the nine-thirty-nine," he said.

The cold sharp wind sprayed his face with snow. Behind him the man with the mustache held the door open for the gray haired lady. The headlight became larger and brighter as the train approached. It was coming up on them rapidly now, and George turned on the two lanterns, stepping a few feet closer to the tracks. The rumble became louder and louder. It was approaching rapidly, too rapidly. "This train isn't going to stop," thought George out loud.

The ground underneath him quivered and he turned from the blinding headlight. Suddenly he was lost in a cloud of swirling snow as the diesel burst by. The snow continued to whip up as noisy freight cars chased the locomotive. George watched for an instant, and then turned and walked past the startled group back into the station. Once in the office, he quickly grabbed the telephone, and without waiting, called into it, "Hello, Arch". The phone remained strangely silent. Not even the familiar hum was evident. Obviously, it was dead. Slowly, he put it down and left the office to confront the puzzled passengers who were coming back into the station. "Well," George said, "I guess we lost the nine-thirty-nine. The phone is dead, so we'll just have to wait until it shows up."

The lady smiled again. "Well, I hope it's worth waiting for."

"Would you like to sit down, Mama?"

"No, I don't think so. Now that I'm up, I'll stand a while."

George returned to the doorway and peered out the window. The waiting room became suddenly quiet. The only noise came from the hissing radiator. A loud snore from Willie sleeping in the corner broke the silence as well. The man and the two women turned to glance at him, and looked at each other, smiling in amusement. "He doesn't look like he's going anywhere," said the gray haired lady.

"No," said George, "Willie's been waiting for a train for a long time." It was five minutes to ten by the waiting room clock. He'd have to call Sarah and tell her he would be late after all. A train whistle sounded, not too far away. George turned quickly to look down the track. The headlight of a train was coming into the last turn, blowing for a signal. "Let's hope this is the nine-thirty-nine," said George as he hurried out with his lanterns. When the engineer saw the green and white lights, he responded with the two short blasts of the whistle, and began to slow down. The man and woman stood huddled on both sides of the gray haired lady as the big diesel slowly passed them and came to a halt on the other side of the station. The man and woman guided her to the coach doorway as the brakeman stood by patiently. She kissed them before boarding the train. Immediately, the brakeman swung his stepping box up into the coach. After giving the engine up ahead a signal with his lantern, he boarded himself. As the train started to move, the man with the mustache and the woman with the white hat strained for a glimpse of the gray haired lady. It was exactly ten o'clock as George stepped back into the station. Maybe he wouldn't be late after all. Quickly, he gathered up the money, placed it in the safe, and picked up the telephone.

"Hello," said Sarah.

"I'm on my way," said George, "the nine-thirty-nine was late and I didn't think I'd get out of here on time, but it's all right now."

"You'll drive carefully, won't you," Sarah pleaded.

"Sure will," said George. "See you in a few minutes." George hung up and turned toward the office door. He paused to see if everything was in order, and, checking the door lock, he stepped out into the waiting room. Willie was staring sleepily out of the waiting room window. He was unshaven as usual, and George, noting his old brown coat, was tempted to pat him on the back to see if any dust would come out of it.

Pushing his dirty felt hat back on his head he said, "Was that the nine-thirty-nine that just left, George?"

"That's right Will."

"Whooie, it sure does look mean out there. I wouldn't be out there for nobody."

George smiled. "No, Willie, I guess you wouldn't. Well, good night."

"Good night, George," Willie continued to peer out of the window until he saw the red tail lights of George's car disappear over the hill. Slowly, he made his way back to the corner and yawned as he unlaced his shoes. By ten fifteen, Willie was snoring loudly.

* *

CHARLIE'S CHANCE

by Bro. James Heaney fms

The express howled demonically as it whirled through the subway tunnel towards Times Square. As he sat there, rocking back and forth to the heavy careening of the train around the long turns, the stations flashed by one after another, empty, brilliantly lighted, meaningless. A sense of separation gripped him, almost as tangible as the frightening speed at which he hurtled beneath the lives of thousands of people he would never know, sitting across from strangers who would never touch his life or affect it in even the least meaningful way. The stations flashed from light to darkness and back again with greater and greater frequency, and no one spoke, or made the least gesture of unity across the empty aisle. The speed increased, and the howl of the imprisoned train rose another note in protest. The great steel chassis rocked harder and harder, until all within became locked in the possibility of a mutual destiny, death in the fleeting of an instant. Though any one of them might cringe inwardly, yet his eyes might never break the empty aisle between fear and friendship.

Balancing again to the movement of the train, he forced himself to remember that subways didn't have accidents, they just kept going until they were no good anymore and someone junked them. The brilliance of the fluorescent lights hurt his eyes when he looked up at the ads above the windows, vaguely wondering about the polio victims who needed help. He had never seen one, and the picture of the crippled boy was a thing far off, a thing that would never come near him, or hold out mute hands for help. It had just been shown him, no one ever bothered to explain it, or tell him how to help it, or if it was worth the trouble. It might even be a big fake anyway, with some guy raking in shekels on the sympathy of nice ladies who saw the ad. If anybody really saw it. The howling stopped, and the rocking motion lessened. He felt the forward tug on his body of the train slowing. They all stretched a bit, like they were going to get off, and he rubbed his hand first on his knee, and then felt in his pocket again for the wallet. He braced himself for the final jerk of the train stopping. When the doors opened, he got up, walked across the aisle, and

out onto the platform towards the stairs. Behind him the doors closed again and the lights of the train moved away into the tunnel again, further and further on until its noise died away into the semi-silence of shuffling, waiting feet.

At street level the day was cloudy, damp, cold. A wind blew down Broadway past the theatre facades, and the penny arcades were just great empty glittering rooms full of machines staring, helplessly idle. A thick sweet aroma hung about the candy shops, and inside the automat people walked back and forth beneath the bright lights overhead and the blank gaze of Father Duffy's statue outside. He walked past a newstand without buying a paper, and past an empty record store that blared out canned music into the street. Taxis rolled by on the prowl for a fare while a clerk stood at the door of a clothiers looking fixedly into the sky. He kept walking.

At 48th street he turned the corner and walked towards his job, Harry's Shoe Repair. Harry always had him come in late like this to save the cost of paying him for the early hours when there was no business. He was lucky to have the job, since only now that Harry was getting old did he need an assistant, and sooner or later he would inherit the shop for himself. The customers were mostly theatre people.

He walked up to the door and opened it. The bell chimed with a clear hard sound as he went in, and Harry's voice squeaked shrilly from the back room. "That you, Charlie, I thought you was never comin' in." The smell of the leather and machine oil had the same edge as Harry's voice; it cut the air like a cobbler's awl. Harry spoke impatiently. "I thought you was never comin' in, the lady from the Roseland building was in for the dancers' shoes, and I had to tell her I'd have them for her in a half hour. I can't afford to do that too often ya know, so as soon as we finish them you can bring them over to her place. She'll be waiting."

At the machine he began the finishing touches on the shoes Harry had already blocked out roughly, and the minutes slipped by rapidly. Afterwards he began to shine them. When the last one was done, he looked them over beneath the bright lights above the machine. They fascinated him, brown wheels, black wheels, wire brushes of brass and steel whirring gray and yellow in the glare, the soft purring noise of the machine pulsating in rapid rocking rhythm. The light played over the polish, and as he put his hand into one empty shoe, he wondered who would wear it.

"Awright, they're all set to go now. The room number is

5-G, Sol Pender's place. Get goin', hurry back, we got another job comin' from Herbert's up the street, and he's supposed to be here at quarter to!" Harry walked around from the other side of the machine with the other three pairs of shoes grasped in his grimy hands, and gave them to him brusquely. After he had wiped his hands on the sides of his apron he looked up at Charlie, a rough awkwardness making him hesitant. "And tell that bum across the street to get the hell out of here and quit pesterin' me, tell him I don't know him, I don't owe him nothin', and he might as well get drunk on somebody else's cash, I ain't got none to spare him. Go on, you tell him that."

Charlie looked out the window, and after a taxi had passed, a very dirty decrepit man, leaning dejectedly against a brown lamp post, confronted him from across the street. His hat slouched down around his ears, and his suit hung limply from his shoulders. Perhaps it had once been new, bright stiff blue, but no longer.

After the taxi had passed, he looked across the street into the shop, eyes staring, glazed in a paroxysm of an effort to see. The pastiche of store fronts, barber poles and pizzerias that sometimes shone with sunlight, sometimes with fog and rain and wet cars, suddenly focused on them when their eyes met. Someday a big bridge might come to be in that look, a sudden warm touch might clothe him in a magic costume, and the blankness of the olive drab life would dissolve before it. Maybe getting married would do it, a better job, his own shop; and with a good girl, the perpetual lonely riding through darkness would grow a light at the open end.

He fumbled at the zipper of his jacket after he had put the shoes down to free his hands. He picked them up again, and went to the door. Harry might have helped him open the latch, but Harry was busy, and he didn't want to be bothered. Finally he got some of the shoes under his arm and got the door open with his left hand. When it shut after him, he gathered himself together again, and turned to walk up the street. He remembered the bum's eyes, and remembered at the same time that he had to tell him to get lost. He crossed over in the middle of the street and went up to the lamp post, shoes filling his arms.

He wondered why the bum didn't move when he got close, just continued staring. The smell of liquor answered him. "Hey you, what a' ya doin' here?" There was no answer. "Ya got a name, ya got a tongue, come on, talk!" A blank look replied, but it was blank like a huge pleading, like an unfillable emptiness. His mouth hung open, and the smell was stifling, even in the street.

Charlie wanted to shake him, to make him say something, to make something come out of that stinking, stubble ringed mouth, but he had an armful of shoes. They got in his way very badly, and at last he had to bump the man with his shoulder to get through to him. "Listen, if ya don't get out of here I'm gonna have to call a copy and get ya hauled away. Come on now, ya don't want that, huh?"

The man turned to him for the first time, and some of the glaze slid off his staring eyes. The jaw muscles tightened, the mouth closed, and he spoke. "Tell him help me mister, tell Charlie help me."

Charlie bent towards him, and then leaned back quickly when the smell hit him. "Look buddy, I don't want to make no trouble for ya, just leave like Harry says, and everything'll be all right, no problems for nobody. See, it worries Harry's business, havin' ya standin' here all day long. The customers start to wonder about it." Suddenly he realized that the bum had said his own name, not Harry's. He looked him over carefully for a moment, and decided he didn't know him. "Look, I said, just get out of here. So scram, and don't let me catch ya here again, or it's the cops for sure."

As he turned to walk away up the street, he felt a hand on his arm. The dull eyes were pleading. "You tell him, mister, tell Charlie help me?"

He shrugged off the hand and started walking. Behind him he heard the same words repeated slowly, quietly, as if the man were talking to himself. He looked back and saw him rock backward on his heels to lean against the lamp post again, vacant eyes staring into the shoe shop no longer. He kept walking.

After stopping at the newstand to say hello to the bookie who sold papers there, he turned down Broadway to go to the Roseland building. As he crossed the street, he looked back again, and saw the bum also walking in that direction slowly, his steps not quite sure on the pavement. He turned his back and started down towards Times Square.

The street was crowded now, and tourists walked along in Bermuda shorts, cameras slung over their shoulders, looking in the windows of the cheap souvenir stores at the shiny statues of liberty painted in painful colors, inhaling the sweetish smell of hot fat from the luncheonettes. Everybody needed their money, and they gave it out by the handfull in the restaurants, movies,

and penny arcades. The automat was a novelty, the subway a thrill. Where they lived, there were no Roseland buildings. As Charlie walked downtown, they passed him, chattering and holding hands. The neon lights of the theater marquees brightened the pallor of his face, so as he went on it changed hues ever so slightly each step he took.

He walked past a photo shop, looking at the pictures for the thousandth time, mechanically, but suddenly realized that a girl in a tight red sweater stood at the door. She smiled at him, and he eyed her. Straightening up, she opened her mouth to speak, but something in her eyes abruptly frightened him. He was afraid he would suddenly find himself unable to say anything to her in return, and he would look foolish. She would take him so that he could not be his own anymore. He turned and began walking more rapidly, but he wondered if one of the empty shoes would fit her.

At the next corner he waited for the light since there was a cop there directing traffic, and then almost got hit anyway when he crossed after it changed. He swore and kept walking until he reached the corner where the Roseland building hung its cheap stone and worn out architecture out over the theater front and the dwarfed, busy side street. As he went into the lobby, the stale smell of interminable cigarettes added to the darkness of the already dimly lit interior. After he asked for five, the elevator operator shut the gate, and they went up slowly past the floors that lay sandwiched so tight on top of one another that the concrete between seemed to squash out in dirty blobs. The worn sleeve of the uniform reached over to open the gate again, and he walked out into a hallway with many doors inset into the faded peach pink walls. The naked bulbs accentuated the fingermarks and stains everywhere, but he didn't get paid to notice these things. He saw a half opened door marked G with Sol Pender's name on it, so he walked in.

It was a costume designer's place with a dressing room, and in the corner of the one large room he walked into a coat rack which was draped with spangled orange vests and pants that still looked pretty new. In the opposite corner a big dressing table loaded down with make-up jars exuded the smell of grease into the odor of stale smoke and cloth that already hung heavy in the air. The naked bulb in the ceiling made him feel like he was still in the hallway. On either side of the room a door stood, out of one of which abruptly came a large fat man with a stomach stuck way out in front of him. He paused on seeing Charlie, then wheezed across the room, trailing behind him from the half-opened door a cloud of smoke, and a sudden strange sweet odor. He stuck one of his pudgy

pink hands into his pocket, groping for what turned out to be a fair sized wallet.

"You're the man from Harry's, huh?" He saw the shoes shining in the light, and took one from his arms. The polish clearly impressed him. "Awright, how much?"

"Eight dollars, there were five pair."

"Awright, here ya are."

Charlie dodged the money and extended the receipt pad. "Sign here." The fat man walked over to the dressing table, shoved aside some of the jars to make room, and signed it. Charlie ripped off the top sheet and handed it to him, taking the money with his other hand. The other grunted, fumbled in his wallet, and pressed something into his palm with sweaty fingers.

"Here, go get yourself loaded."

"Thanks." He walked out the door and back through the peachy hallway to the elevator. When a burst of giggling echoed through the thin panelling of a door, he shied away from it, walking up to the elevator without stopping. He pushed the botton for service.

Once out on the street, he realized that the weather had turned brighter in the short time he had been inside. The sun shone clearly down on the cold streets. He zipped his jacket all the way up and put his hands in his pockets to keep warm while he walked, this time for a change up seventh avenue instead of Broadway. He came to a corner where a man was standing on a box talking to about ten people, trying to persuade them about something. He stopped to listen for a second, since he had got throught with Sol Pender pretty quickly, and Harry wouldn't need him for another then minutes or so.

The man was skinny, and his thin arms waved almost frantically about whatever it was he had to sell. He needed a haircut, and his long forelock just seemed to constantly fall down in his face and make him push it up, never quite well enough to keep it there. His visage was oval and fresh shaven, but his gray eyes and suit matched the color of the buildings and the hard cement of the sidewalks. It didn't take Charlie long to realize he was some kind of a preacher. He stuck around and listened. He didn't feel like moving on, so he just stayed at the outer rim so no one he knew would think he had anything to do with it. The guy was saying something about Saint Paul, but it didn't make much sense.

Who cared for Paul if he hadn't given this guy a better suit of clothes, or made him a better speaker to keep the people from drifting away, like they were now. He stayed on for another minute, wondering what kept the man going, talking to people about something they didn't want to hear about, with nothing more to show for it than needing a haircut. When the people had gone, he went over to where he had stepped down from his box. "Hi, you do this all the time?"

He looked up more intently. "Sure, all the time. You interested?"

"No, just wonderin'. Who keeps you goin' with this, you got a rich aunt or somethin'?"

"I just make what I can get, from what people give me."

Charlie looked away up the street. "Not much, huh?"

The man spoke quickly, in a quiet, earnest voice. "But I live for it, do you have anything like that?"

Charlie stood for a moment gazing into his face emptily, and then shifted his feet, getting ready to move off. The closeness of the man to him and the intensity of his eyes made him feel uncomfortable, like he wanted something of him that he wasn't prepared to give. He looked away and began to move. "Well, I don't know, I never thought much about it. I gotta go now." The man tugged at his sleeve and he turned around again.

"Do you?" The preacher had straightened up, and it seemed as if someone had all of a sudden put a piece of steel in his backbone, his shoulders took on a kind of military squareness. Charlie shook him off and started moving again. He had never seen gray eyes like that before, and they upset him. He didn't like being upset. When he felt the man grab his sleeve again, he kept moving, getting a little angry. "Look, I told ya, I don't worry about it, so leggo and mind your own business, and nobody has to get worked up or nothin'."

When the man tried once more, he spun about quickly and shouted in his face. "Look, ya got the message? I don't want a ny. Awright? Awright!" The other man's wincing might have hurt him some other time, but right now he didn't feel like being bothered over feelings. Even so, the thought of Harry waiting for him broke off any apology he might have made. Turning for the last time, he hurried away up Seventh avenue, leaving

the man standing there looking bleakly after him.

The gray pavement flew quickly under his feet, and the sun shed a real brilliance on the late morning. The noon hour traffic crept by, motors blending like a fit of coughing shaking the crowd in a filled hall. All about him people walked, and their shuffling feet could be heard when ever there was the least gap in the traffic. The sounds tumbled together in the clear brightness of the cold, smooth and unbroken along the street except when the lights changed and a new way opened for the cars. Then the motors coughed anew, warming up in the chill air. All the cars moved, but some turned at the light, while others never bothered to turn, but just kept going straight on into the great stone distance up seventh avenue. For them the light was only a pause on the way.

As he reached the corner by Harry's, he saw the bum standing on the opposite corner up at the other end of the street. When he saw Charlie he began to walk towards him, leaving the paper stand where he had probably been talking to the proprietor. He made for Charlie as fast as his wobbly legs could manage. The glaze had left his eyes, and in its place stood a hope that had never pierced into him before. He came on with shuffling, wandering steps, not noticing the pavement, the parking meters, people looking at him from the stores. He just saw Charlie, and ran for him. He did not look behind him when suddenly his unsteady legs carried him off the pavement to cross the street in the middle of the block. His eyes were full of recognition.

Charlie stood, dumb, seeing and not understanding, as the cab hit the man dead center and flung his arms and legs out into space, like the blossoming of a blue flower. The cab threw him several feet, but not enough to give the cabby room to stop before he was under the wheels.

Panic gripped Charlie for a moment when he saw the blue lump beneath the car, and recognized where the face was by the blood that began to trickle from the mouth. The cabby was getting out to look for help, but Charlie stood for a long moment, poised hesitantly on the curb. All at once the barrier could break down, and life could come together there in the middle of the street. Panic held him, and then there was a man running, and then another, and then there were many standing around. He heard a siren, and realized that it no longer mattered that he did not know what to do. The ability of the others shamed him, but he could not move.

When the ambulance had gone and nothing remained on the street but a stain, Charlie looked up to the gray office buildings

towering far above him. A thousand lives there, and they never touched his. They didn't exist. The sun reflecting from windows high up got in his eye, so he stepped over next to a car, and found it standing between himself and the dark stain on the asphalt. The world shifted back into perspective.

As he opened the door, the shop bell rang and Harry's voice snapped out from the other side of the machine in a shrill treble. "That you, Charlie, I thought ya was never comin' back." Harry handed him a pair of men's shoes. They were large, and he couldn't hold on to them and take off his jacket at the same time, so he put them down and walked into the back room. He put his apron on and went back to the machine and its flashing wheels and soft purring rhythmic sound.

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