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Dust

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Dust



A STUDENT PUBLICATION

DUST



J A N U A R Y 1 9 3 4

Visiting Out

WILLIAM E. WILSON

ELOISE ANGERMEYER had a strange sensation when she walked across the hall of the second floor. It was hard to imagine there were rooms under her: the carpets were so thick. When she went up into the attic at home, she always felt a little dizzy and scared.

"Now, here's your room, honey. Make yourself at home."

Eloise looked in timidly.

"Oh!" she said.

It was a big room, as big as the dining room and parlor together at home when the folding doors were open. There was a bright blue carpet on the floor. The wallpaper had bouquets of roses and blue-birds on it. The lace curtains were held back with wide yellow ribbon, and dangling on the end of each windowshade cord was a brightly painted parrot. In one corner was a dressing table with a three-piece mirror and an ivory manicure set. The powder box was a china

OLD CORNER BOOK SHOP, 18 COLLEGE ST.—31 MARKET SQ.
OLD AND RARE BOOKS — "THE SHOP FOR BOOK-LOVERS"



Wood engraving by Tyler Micoleau

dancing girl with wide, frilly skirts. On the lace spread of the bed sprawled another doll, a very funny one in black pajamas and with real hair. There was a bolster on the bed and on top of it a little shirred organdy pillow, like a birdcage. As she looked at it, Eloise was both delighted and troubled. She had no idea what she would do with it at night. It was much too lovely for her to sleep on it.

"Oh, Aunt Clara!"

Aunt Clara smiled and went over to the bed to press out a wrinkle.

"Do you like it?"

Eloise replied by stroking the soft brown hair of the doll.

"Now the bathroom's down the hall, honey. You probably want to wash up a little before supper. Uncle Adolph ought to be home any time now. We always eat supper early, in the summer."

The heavy blond woman started for the stairs, but Eloise took a deep breath and called to her.

"Aunt Clara?"

"What?"

"Will Uncle Adolph really take us riding to-n'ight . . . after supper, I mean?"

"Sure. . . . He always does."

Aunt Clara turned and clattered down the stairs in her loose slippers. Sighing, Eloise sat down on the bench in front of the triple mirrors. She found that by turning them she could see herself in all three mirrors at once. It made her dizzy. She tried to pretend she was grown-up, but as she rested her little square chin on her palms, she saw two big tears brimming over her eyes. Then she laughed, because there were six tears in the mirrors, and six eyes. And three noses and three mouths. She almost wished Mamma would have to take more than the usual week in the hospital.

When Eloise went downstairs, Aunt Clara was in the kitchen, her

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FANCY GROCERIES, WINES AND LIQUORS

black slippers clattering as she moved about. She had unbuckled their straps to relieve her feet.

"My feet swells so in this heat," she said. Her face was flushed, and a string of damp blond hair kept falling over her eyes.

"Your Uncle Adolph ought to be here any minute now. . . . You want to get the ham out of the refrigerator?"

Eloise opened the shiny white door. As she stooped to take the ham out of the box, she paused a minute to let the clammy coolness bathe her face and hands.

"Here, honey. I'll slice it. Can you cut the bread?"

The bread board was painted bright green. Eloise ran her fingertips over its shiny surface.

"You got everything so nice, Aunt Clara," she said.

"Your Uncle Adolph gave me that electric refrigerator last week."

When Eloise had sliced the bread, she scraped the crumbs into her hollowed palm and looked about for the stale bread pot.

"Where do you put these?" she asked.

Aunt Clara opened her chubby fist to see what she was holding.

"Oh, the crumbs. . . . Why, throw them in the strainer in the sink. I guess. I usually cut the bread in the wrapper. It holds the crumbs. And then I wad it up and throw it out with the waste."

Eloise threw the crumbs into the strainer, feeling very wicked.

"Now," Aunt Clara said, wiping her forehead and sitting down on a green chair, "I guess everything's ready."

Just then Uncle Adolph's car rattled gravel against the cellar windows as it rolled along the drive. Eloise looked out. The car was long and black and shiny. Uncle Adolph got out and went over to Grandpa Kierst, who was sitting under a maple tree. He wore knickers, and bounced when he walked. Eloise thought of what Papa often said. Uncle Adolph was worth a hundred thousand dollars.

MRS. EDGREN, SECRETARIAL TEACHER, 47 GEORGE ST.
TYPEWRITING, STENOGRAPHY, MIMEOGRAPHING

When he came in, Aunt Clara wiped her hands on her apron and kissed him.

"I only got boiled ham and pickled beets and ice-tea to-night, honey," she said. "It's so hot. I thought maybe we could get some barbecues later. I thought we'd go riding. Here's Eloise."

Uncle Adolph looked at Eloise and grinned. He had a smooth red face, and there was a diamond in his tie-pin.

"Hello, kid," he said. "Want to go riding to-night?"

Eloise was embarrassed. Papa never spoke to her when he came home from the furniture factory at night.

"Hello, Uncle Adolph," she said.

He turned his back on her and began to take off his collar and tie.

"Got to do something to cool off. Paper says it went up to a hundred and three-tenths at the kiosk to-day. That means about a hundred twenty on the street. It was a hundred and three official over in Saint Looie. . . . Phew! Hell of a day for Emma to have a baby, ain't it?"

Eloise thought of her mother in the hospital. She ought to think of her mother oftener.

Uncle Adolph put his collar and tie on top of the refrigerator and went into the front of the house to read his newspaper.

"Let's go get Grandpa," Aunt Clara said.

Papa said Grandpa Kierst was a little "nooky." He said the children would probably inherit it. "It skips a generation," he always said. Grandpa Kierst was still under the maple, gripping his cane. His white beard and his little bald head glistened in the sunlight.

"Come on, Grandpa. Supper's ready," Aunt Clara said. "Eloise Angermeyer's here."

The old man did not move. Eloise was a little frightened.

"I don't know whether I can eat anything," he said. "I ain't had a

ALTANTIC SUPER-SERVICE, SLICK STRAIGHT, PROPRIETOR
COMPLETE AUTOMOBILE SERVICE — 25 MEETING STREET

bite all day. It might upset my stummick."

"Why, Grandpa, you had a good breakfast and a good dinner."

"That's funny. I don't remember it at all. Now I don't remember that at all."

He got up, leaning on his cane, and followed them into the house.

They hurried through the meal in the dining room. None of them was hungry. Eloise was so excited she couldn't eat. The table was round and had a white cloth on it, like the one Mamma used at Christmas. They had iced tea in big yellow glasses with glass spoons that you sucked through, like at a soda fountain. Uncle Adolph said he didn't want a second slice of ham. Sometimes Grandpa Kierst would forget where he was, and Aunt Clara would have to put his knife and fork back into his hands.

"Grandpa's so forgetful," she said to Eloise.

"Forgetful, you say?" The old man looked up. "That's right. I bet Ma didn't feed the horse to-day."

It was just as if he didn't know Grandma was dead. They didn't have any horse, either. It was funny, in a way, and kind of spooky, too.

After supper Uncle Adolph said.

"Why don't you stack the dishes to-night, Clare?"

But Aunt Clara drowned his words with the hiss and rattle of hot water running into her dishpan, and he returned to a front room to wait until they were ready to go riding.

"I can wash, Aunt Clara. You dry."

Aunt Clara hesitated.

"All right," she said finally. "I got a manicure to-day."

Eloise looked at her aunt's fingers. Her nails were stained a bright red.

Eloise's jumper was glued to her when she finally got into the back

ANTHONY'S DRUG STORE, ANGELL AND THAYER STREETS
FILMS, DEVELOPING AND PRINTING

seat of the big car beside Aunt Clara. She saw her aunt pull out the low collar of Irish lace and blow a gust of breath down into her bosom. Then she settled herself in the seat, touching as little of it as possible. Eloise imitated her. It all was very ladylike and luxurious.

"Everything sticks," Aunt Clara said.

"That's a sign of rain usually, Mamma always says. I sure do hope it is."

She felt quite grown-up entering into the conversation. Aunt Clara and Uncle Adolph did not seem to mind.

"Well, I hope so for your mamma's sake. It's awful hot to have a baby, I guess."

Eloise thought of Mamma and Oscar and Papa and Anna and the rest of them. They seemed so far away now. Of course, she wanted everything to be easy for Mamma, but Mamma didn't seem very real just now.

Uncle Adolph started the car, and when they reached the boulevard, he pointed at the ruts in the soft asphalt.

"Look at that!" he said. "Just look at that and let 'em tell you it ain't hot!"

They all stared out at the scarred street.

"How's that?" Grandpa Kierst asked.

"It's hot, Pa," Uncle Adolph shouted, as he put the car in low gear again. "The asphalt's melted."

"Oh, yes . . . sure . . ."

Still not understanding, Grandpa chuckled nervously.

"Pa thinks I said something funny, Uncle Adolph said.

They headed out the boulevard, which soon met the highway, a wide strip of concrete. Eloise stuck her head out the window and let the hot air beat her face. It was grand.

"We're going around the Loop, Eloise," Uncle Adolph shouted.

ALWAYS A GOOD BUY IN USED CARS
HAGAN MOTOR SALES, INC. AUTHORIZED FORD SERVICE

The brown scorched fields flew by. There was a boy driving cows home from the pasture. She saw a scarecrow. The tattered, burnt-up cornfields made her think of witches dancing.

"There's the *insane* asylum, Eloise!"

She drew in her head quickly and looked at the towered brick buildings on a low hill surrounded by a park. They gave her the creeps, and she turned away. Then she thought of what Papa had said about Grandpa Kierst, and shivered, staring at him with a terrifying interest. He had a round, bald head, like Uncle Adolph's, and on the back there was a little bulge, like a left-over scrap of dough daubed on a dumpling. She wondered if that was what made him "nooky." She felt the back of her own head. It had a bump, too. Papa said, "It skips a generation." She was frightened.

But just then they passed a hay-ride. Uncle Adolph tooted his horn at the low lumbering wagon, and everyone in it shouted and blew squawkers at them.

"I bet it's hot and prickly on that hay," he said when they were past.

Eloise remembered the Lutheran Sunday School hay ride.

"They put a tarpaulin over it, Uncle Adolph."

"An' they call it a *hay-ride*!"

Eloise had never thought of that. It puzzled her.

"I believe it's getting cooler," Aunt Clara said.

The drafts that zig-zagged through the open windows of the sedan had dried the perspiration on them, and as they approached the river near Bluffs, it did seem as if the air got cooler.

At Bluffs they looked down on the winding river. It was the Ohio, the same river that flowed past the foot of Main Street. Uncle Adolph pointed at the trees that lined the opposite shore.

"That's Kentucky over there," he said.

"THREE STEPS DOWN" — 45 WATERMAN STREET
FOURTEEN HOME COOKED MEALS FOR FIVE DOLLARS

It was queer. You just looked across the river, and there was Kentucky, another state. Eloise had read the Little Colonel Books. Kentucky seemed so foreign and romantic.

Aunt Clara leaned forward excitedly.

"Look, honey, there's whitecaps!"

Uncle Adolph stopped the car. The drafts through the windows died suddenly. The air was stifling. Yet down on the river there were whitecaps. Uncle Adolph turned and glanced at the western sky behind them.

"Looks like it's fixin' to blow up a rain," he said.

Aunt Clara and Eloise turned, too. The sky was yellow, a sickish muddy color. As they looked, a plume of dust from the concrete road twisted and somersaulted for a moment, then shot straight at them. The big car trembled slightly.

"It's a cyclone, Adolph!" Aunt Clara screamed.

Eloise was terror-stricken and looked at her uncle.

Uncle Adolph shook his head.

"No. . . . But we better park here till it's over."

The people of the little town of Bluffs were running out into the street to get a look at the rising storm. Screen doors slammed. Children yelled. Men, in their shirt-sleeves, stood at the curbs, pointing, the women behind them staring up at the sky. The women's dresses whipped in the wind.

Grandpa Kierst fidgeted in the front seat.

"It's going to rain, Pa," Uncle Adolph said. "Here it comes now."

Eloise's heart was beating fast. It was exciting.

The first drop splattered on the back window of the car and streaked down through the white, caked dust. The wind whistled round them, and Aunt Clara cranked up the windows. Eloise tried to crank hers up, but Uncle Adolph had to reach back and do it for her.

JOHN F. CASHMAN, 71 EXCHANGE PLACE
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Then the air in the car was so suffocating that they had to let them down a crack.

The trees in the lawns bent low. A big cardboard box flopped and bounced down the street until it flattened against a telephone pole. Newspapers, leaves and all kinds of rubbish danced past them. A woman, trying to keep her skirts below her knees, was whirled completely around. Eloise laughed.

"Gee!" she said.

"Oh, my windows, Adolph!" Aunt Clara cried above the storm. "I left my windows all open!"

But Uncle Adolph did not hear her. He was watching the churning river below them.

Finally the rain came in full force, and the wind slackened. The water came down in bucketsful, washing over the car like a wave. The windows were glazed with rain. The thud of great drops on the roof and the drip and splash along the window frames drowned all other sounds. Through the crack which Aunt Clara had left at the top of her window, they could see the flooded highway. Cascades of water rolled in the yellow ditch. It was very cozy inside. Eloise pretended they were in a boat.

Uncle Adolph raised his arms to let the fresh, damp air penetrate under his armpits.

"Whee!" he said.

Eloise could feel herself coming to life. Her parched skin seemed to drink the dampness. Even Grandpa brightened under the change.

"It's a relief," he said, smiling back at her. It was the first time he had spoken to her. She smiled at him. He wasn't really crazy, just "nooky."

The rain stopped as suddenly as it began. The whole storm did not last more than twenty minutes. Uncle Adolph reached out and wiped

**EAT WELL TO KEEP WELL
BROWN DINING ROOMS**

off the windshield, and they looked out upon a new world. Bushes lay flat, plastered to the wet earth. Yellow mud streaked the concrete highway. Leaves and trash were scattered everywhere.

When Uncle Adolph started the car, the engine hissed softly.

"Boy!" he said. "She runs like a million dollars! It's the dampness in the carburetor. Listen to her, Clare."

"My curtains will all be ruined," Aunt Clara said.

The car splashed and rattled through the two-mile stretch of gravel to Route 36. By the time they reached the highway, the concrete was dry again. But there was still water in the ditches. The earth was baked so hard it couldn't soak up the rain, Uncle Adolph said.

They stopped at a barbecue stand and got hamburgers. Eloise was sleepy, but she enjoyed the warm bun with the crisp fried meat. Grandpa Kierst only drank a sarsaparilla.

"Some rain!" Uncle Adolph said to the man who brought the sandwiches out to the car.

"Yeah. . . . Blew the roof clean off of a barn three miles north o' here. You said pickle 'n' onion, didn't you?"

When they turned into the boulevard, Eloise sat up. The street it was dark now. The heat was beginning to return. Eloise was almost asleep.

"We ought to sleep better," Aunt Clara said.

"Boy, I'll say!" It was Uncle Adolph's voice, far away.

When they finished their sandwiches and drinks, they started home. lights were not burning.

"Guess the storm did something to the power plant," Uncle Adolph said.

He felt his way carefully for the entrance to the driveway. When the car was nosed in properly, he stepped on the gas. They were all thrown back in their seats.

GOLDEN CHAIN LIBRARIES, 275 THAYER STREET
BOOKS, GREETING CARDS, STATIONERY

"Adolph! You always do that!"

Uncle Adolph laughed and jammed down the brakes, and they were all thrown forward just as violently. Eloise thought it was fun. It woke her up a little.

Aunt Clara fumbled for the door.

"Phew!" she said. "It sure is hot when you stop!"

Inside, the telephone was ringing wildly. Eloise sat down on a straight chair while Aunt Clara answered the telephone. Uncle Adolph stood near. Eloise nodded. She could hear their voices murmuring, but her eyes were closed and she could not see them. Then someone shook her and for a moment she looked up at Aunt Clara.

"You have a baby brother, Eloise. . . ."

Eloise rubbed her eyes. Then she remembered. A brother. . . . She was sorry. They were more trouble than sisters. Her eyes closed again. Faintly she heard their voices. "We can tell her tomorrow. . . . She's so sleepy. . . ."

Upstairs she would have to do something with the pretty birdcage pillow. It wouldn't do for her to sleep on it.

Two Poems

WINFIELD TOWNLEY SCOTT

THE ULTIMATE DEFEAT

*From hunger and from need alone
We come; and each of us is grown
Out of two seeds of duress:
Loneliness and loneliness
Leaping to achieve in space
Security in a little place.*

*The hungry mouth, the urgent tongue
Of want are everlasting young;
Suck to each other give and feed,
With giving, each its need.
They, joined against the world, conspire
To propagate their foe in fire.*

*What wonder then that we have known,
From dark and whirling spark to bone,
Such loneliness as wills us run
Crying beyond the driving sun?
That we who in its grip are pressed
Shall find no peace, shall reach no rest.*

CHANT FOR THE GRAVE

*Take this body down, O earth,
Into your secret places, surrounding
This dust forever dissolute in you.
Cover this body finally and over
This body let the leaves descend
And the ground move closer inward everywhere.*

*Down among the lost arrow-heads
And the ashes of the painted arrows
Where the warriors rest in their dust, and corn
Quenches its plumes in the night, O earth,
Take this body into your secret places.*

*This resurrected soil being now stilled,
Being now ready for the ground, O earth,
Take once again this integrate dust and coax it
Into disintegration, and the leaves
Over it, and among the stricken arrows
Under the rising places of the mountains
Beside the shining darkness of the sea.*

*This was quick and moving and is stilled.
Take now this broken part, O earth, restore it
Into the perfect whole; this pulseless death
Take into the everlasting motion; take
This body down.*

Let's Go to Bed

“LET'S go to bed. Let's go to bed early,” she said.

“All right. We can lie there for such a long time and think how fine it is to be in bed.”

“Let's go to bed twice to-night. Once now—then at two or three I'll wake up and we can go to bed again,” she said.

“Why not three or four times, or half a dozen?”

“No. That wouldn't be going to bed. That would be napping interrupted by dreams, probably bad dreams. No. That wouldn't do.”

“You're crazy, darling,” he said. “I always thought I was crazy until I met you.”

“Maybe we both are. But let's go to bed.”

“I'm hungry. I want some milk and some crackers. Chocolate crackers. Don't you want some chocolate crackers?”

“Yes. . . But let's go to bed. You can put them on the ash-stand and then if you get hungry during the night you can reach them

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BOOKS, GREETING CARDS, STATIONERY



Wood engraving by Tyler Micoleau

easily."

"Yes, dear. What would I do without you, dear?"

"Which pajamas shall I wear?" she said. "I have some beautiful bright red ones. Or do you think it is cold enough for flannel? They're nice and woolly, too."

"Wear a nightdress, darling. I've never seen you in a nightdress. That would be fine. It would make you so feminine."

"And I have the nicest nightdress. Long and sheer. Only it isn't blue."

"I'll give you a blue nightdress for a birthday present. When is your birthday, dear?"

"Next month. Isn't that lovely?"

She didn't know whether it would be lovely. You never could tell. But it wouldn't be like this. She was sure of that. The only thing you can count on in this life is change. Next month might be lovelier than this, she didn't know, but it would be different.

He was roaming about the room in the light from the fire. She heard him brush against a chair in the shadows. It never took him long to get ready. She must hurry. Now he was playing a record. "Lovely lady." That was what he called her. Subtle compliment. He was always so charming. No. Not always. Sometimes he was cruel. Very briefly so. She couldn't understand why. He would be so tender, so adoring. So loving. Then suddenly in a few bitter words he would shatter her, tear away the aura with which he had surrounded her. He hated her then, she was sure of it, but she never understood why.

"Come to bed. Come to bed, darling," he said.

"You're mumbling. I can't hear you. Have you started on the crackers so soon?"

She temporized, brushing her long shining hair, tall in her clinging nightgown. There was something so delicious in getting ready for

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bed. She liked to prolong it.

Tall, in her clinging nightgown, with her shining hair falling about her shoulders, she strolled into the firelight.

"You're lovely," he said. "Lovely lady."

He had turned down the sheets. The pillows nestled together in the firelight, white and soft.

"Let's go to bed," she said.

"But you're so lovely. I want to look at you. You're different, so feminine. You seem so slim and lovely."

"I feel different. Queer!" she said.

"How do you feel?"

"I don't know. Shy and modest, as though I were blushing."

"That's just what I thought. I'm going to put on the light. I want to look at you." He snapped on the amber light at the head of the bed.

"You're beautiful to-night," he said. "You are blushing. You're always lovely, but to-night you're beautiful."

"Put out the light," she said.

She felt queer. Everything was different. Constrained, that was it. She felt constrained. She buried her face in his shoulder.

"I love your hair," he said in the darkness. The fire had died to a red glow. "So fine and silky, so long. Why are you so nice to me?"

"Why are you so nice to me?" Her face was still pressed against his shoulder.

"I love you so much," he said. "Tell me you love me. Tell me you've never loved anyone else the way you love me. For always and always."

"Always," she said.

He was turning her face toward his. His tender hands caressed its contours, the long waves of her shining hair. His lips closed upon hers.

Always, she thought. A long time. A long time ahead and a long

HAGAN MOTOR SALES, INC. AUTHORIZED FORD SERVICE
ALWAYS A GOOD BUY IN USED CARS

time back. She shivered against his long kiss. A long time back when she was so young, so virginal. In a long clinging nightdress, blushing. She turned away toward the wall.

"What is it, dear?" he said.

He lay beside her in the deep stillness. He didn't say any more. He just lay there in the stillness. In the dark.

"What are you thinking of?" she said.

"Clouds. Soft shimmering clouds in a blue sky. Did you ever lie in the grass and watch the clouds? Feel the soft grass. . . ."

"And the warm earth. There was a field in back of my home. . . ." There was a field. When she was young, so young and slim. So remote. All that so remote. And now he was remote. Was he to slip away too? To become so soon a stranger. Far away. Where was the ease of other nights? Gone for a mood. A constraint. . . . She would try desperately.

"Are you hungry?" she said.

No, he wasn't hungry. It was no use. He just lay there in the bed beside her. Still. Far away. A stranger.

"You just want to be loved," he said. "You haven't the capacity to love. You're just a woman."

In the dark she looked at him with alien eyes. She got out of bed and went to the closet. She pulled off the long clinging nightdress and let it fall on the floor. Her tall figure shivered in the cool night air. She put on a pair of pajamas. They covered her body, her long arms and legs with a grateful warmth. She tied their cord tightly about her waist. Defiantly, in the dark she swaggered back to bed.

JULIA SANSCCELIA

Those Who Mourn

EDWARD N. ROBINSON, Jr.

THE frozen marshes lasted for miles and miles, and Fred could not take his eyes from them. He was like an astronomer spying fascinatedly night after night at the same barren crater on the moon. Their desolation was like the barrenness of the planets; there was no life on them, only dead wisps of tough marsh-grass sticking through the snow. Winding in and out, and here and there and everywhere, cutting into the snow-covered frozen marshes were the empty tidal rivers, their black-mud beds ugly and sickening against the white snow.

There were only two other passengers in the car: a husky young fellow with a light grey cap and a red lumber-jacket, the other a thick-set, oldish man with a clean-shaven head and a great drooping mustache who blinked at the advertisements through his cheap, steel-rimmed glasses.

The conductor came along the swaying aisle. He had on a con-

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FANCY GROCERIES, WINES AND LIQUORS

ductor's cap with dull gilt-braid, but a common sheepskin coat. He looked at Fred's ticket, "Breakfast Hill. . . . Ain't had one there for a long time. Not for six months. . . . Are you going to a funeral?"

"Yes," said Fred.

"That's the only reason people come up here, mostly. Who was it? One of the family?"

"My grandmother. . . ."

"Too bad. . . . Too bad. Awful weather for a funeral." He looked out of the train window at the wet falling snow.

"What time do we get there?" asked Fred.

"About eleven, I'll have Joe stop for you, all right."

He waddled off, flatfootedly, steadily down the lurching aisle. Fred looked out of the window again. They were drawing out of the marshes into a scrub forest. The evergreens bent with their burden of wet snow clinging to their boughs. Here in the firm earth the telegraph poles were taller and straighter; on the marshes they had been driven deep in the mud but some of them leaned just the same. The engine pulled harder, for they were beginning the long climb into the hills. Sometimes, as they went into a gulley, the car became overcast with a gloomy daylight darkness.

Fred stared moodily out of the window. What was doing riding across the solitary, bleak salt-marshes and on into the gloomy forests? What was he doing? Why, he was going to his grandmother's funeral. . . . But what was the meaning of that? Why should there be funerals. Why should there be death? Why should his grandmother or anybody die? Why should they be born, if they were to die? Why had his grandmother been born?

And he saw his grandmother as he had last seen her sitting in the late sun of an October afternoon in an old rocking-chair beneath a pear tree with the fallen fruit, the over-ripe and the rotten lying side

FAUNCE HOUSE BARBER SHOP
STEPHAN'S DANDRUFF REMOVER — GUARANTEED

by side, all golden yellow in the burnished light of the Autumn sun. She was sitting there with her long white hair parted in the middle, an old yellow-white shawl drawn about her shoulders, watching the autos speeding by and thinking of death.

He said to himself, slowly, "My grandmother is dead. . . ." Only this minute did he seem to realize it. And then he began to think that he had never known her. During all those summer days, and all those days of summers long ago, he had not known her. Now she was dead. . . .

"Oh, how can I know her?" he thought. "She is gone, and I can never know her, and I shall never, never know her, for she is dead."

He wondered if he could have ever known her. . . . He wondered if he could ever have known about anybody. Could he have known his father, or his mother? Did he know anybody now?

Once he had nearly known. Three years ago he had walked along the desolate beach at Truro in the wind and rain watching the giant ocean greybacks hurl themselves at the passive strand to break into ten billion spray-drops. In the wind and the rain and the salt-spray and the sound of the mad, roaring waves he had nearly known all things. . . .

At the station his Uncle Irving was waiting in the falling snow for him. He was a short, powerful man who had worked hard all his life.

"Hello, Uncle," said Fred.

"Hello—mighty mean weather"

"Yes, it's horrible."

"Snowed when your grandfather was buried and it snowed when your father was buried and it snowed when your mother was buried. Folks say a Skillings don't die until they have to dig through a foot o' snow and four foot o' frozen ground and then keep shovelling the snow outa the grave until they puts the casket in. . . . Sam Clough

ARE YOU TIRED OF YOUR EATING PLACE?
TRY THE TRIANGLE DINING ROOM, 55 WATERMAN ST.

and Tom Whiteside been diggin' all mornin' and hain't got it done yet, at least, not's I know of when I come down."

"You're looking well, Uncle."

"Yep! And I feel well too. But it's the worst dang winter since two after the war. Everybody's snowed in up the line. Don't see my next door neighbor more'n once a week. Been collecting the eggs every half-hour so they won't freeze. Never seen nothin' like it!"

They got into the old Essex. The roads were broken through, but they went slowly so as not to slip out of the gutter and get stuck.

The house was a great, white, square farmhouse with kitchen, woodshed, storehouse, and privy, each smaller than the one before, all attached and strung along from the house to the great white barn. They rode into the yard and went into the house by way of the well-stocked woodshed. In the large kitchen over a huge cast iron stove was a lanky girl in jackboots frying pork chops.

"Hel-lo, Fred. . . . Never expected to see you so s-o-o-n." His aunt drawled slowly and clung to her last word like a minister saying *Amen*. "This is terrible weather, isn't it? How have you been? Russell has another baby. Shirley's almost grown-up—she's going to start school next year."

"How have you been, Aunt Joe?"

"Oh, fine. Had Doctor Saunders once for my rheumatism. Everyone's fine, but I've never seen such a winter!"

During the monstrous and inelegant dinner of pea-soup, pork chops, home-made applesauce, fried potatoes, carrots, turnips, corn-bread preserved pears, and ginger-bread, everybody still talked about the weather and the difference of the price of milk there and in Boston. And all through the meal Fred thought of his dead grandmother lying in the cold front parlor.

Right after dinner the neighbors began to come. All of them came

A COMPLETE LINE OF COLLEGE SEAL STATIONERY
AT THE UNIVERSITY STORE, FAUNCE HOUSE.

to the front door, which they never did ordinarily. And they sat quietly in the parlor in the rows of chairs taken from all over the house. Nobody said anything and in the stillness everybody could hear everybody else breathing. When the front door would open everybody would turn stiffly and stare at whoever came in. Some of them would come into the parlor and stop and look into the casket and some of them would walk straight by without even turning their heads.

Long after the front door had stopped opening, the minister came in from the back of the house and went up to the coffin and stood there praying for a long time without saying anything. His dark, Prince Albert coat fitted him tightly and his trousers were so long they almost touched the floor. When he turned around Fred noticed that he was very young. He could not have been more than twenty-three, Fred thought.

He began to read the burial service in a loud rolling voice, as if he were preaching from a church pulpit. When he began to speak, a black cat that had been asleep unnoticed in a corner woke up suddenly and ran under the coffin and out into the hall. Everybody looked darkly at one another. When the minister came to the part where he said his own prayer he spoke of there being no truth in the many superstitions about death, and everybody knew that he meant the way the cat had run under the coffin, but nobody quite believed him.

After the service Fred got into the Essex with his aunt and his uncle and his grandmother's brother, Frank. Nobody said anything for a minute and then his aunt said, "His pants were too long."

"Never mind his pants," his uncle said concernedly, "Does anyone know if they got the grave dug?"

"Oh, Mr. Benson will take care of that!"

"It was a mighty peculiar thing though the way that cat ran out

MRS. EDGREN, SECRETARIAL TEACHER, 47 GEORGE ST.
TYPEWRITING, STENOGRAPHY, MIMEOGRAPHING



Linoleum cut by Adelaide Koch

of there. . . ." said Frank.

"Poor Kitty, she scared me nearly to d-e-a-t-h!"

"Fred, don't you think Frazier talks too loud?" . . . What's the matter, Fred?"

"Isn't it ever going to stop snowing?"

"Getting worse—a regular sleet s-t-o-r-m."

"I wonder if we can get in the cemetery?"

"You've put chains on, Irving?"

"Huh! Had 'em on all winter!"

"What's keeping the hearse?"

"They'll be along. . . ."

The hearse finally came out of the driveway and went up ahead and the Essex and the two Fords lumbered along after it in the driving sleet. All the way to the graveyard behind the schoolhouse, Fred kept saying to himself again and again, "I wonder if they know her any better than I do." When they got to the schoolhouse Fred looked across a wide snowy field and saw the gravediggers still working. The road across it had been broken open, but it wasn't plowed out. The deep ruts looked treacherous.

"They can never get through," Fred said.

"Oh, yes, Benson'll get through all right. He went in only a week ago when Mr. Chapman was buried."

"It looks top heavy," Fred said.

The hearse started. It sank nearly up to its hubs and then, bouncing wildly over the rocks and into the ruts, surged ahead, throwing up a shower of mud over the snow. It was almost across when it suddenly slid off the roadway into a gully and tipped over. It lay on its side with one of the hind wheels spinning in the air.

As the Essex came across more slowly, the driver of the hearse crawled out through the window and then pulled Mr. Benson, the

J. V. PASTORE "THE COLLEGE TAILOR"
SCHOOL OF DESIGN BUILDING

undertaker, out. After Mr. Benson got out he reached back in and got his derby and put it on his head.

When the other cars came up everybody got out in the sleet and went up to the tipped-over hearse. Fred's aunt began to cry, "It's awful. . . . I did so want a nice funeral for Mother. . . ."

The two gravediggers came running heavily across from the cemetery to see what they could do. Nobody said much of anything except Fred's aunt, who cried all the time. When the gravediggers got there Fred's uncle went over to them and asked them if they had the grave dug and they said they had.

"A most unfortunate occurrence. . . . A most ill-timed event. . . ." Mr. Benson went around saying quietly to everybody.

The young minister without either a hat or an overcoat tried to comfort the weeping woman, but when she saw he didn't have any hat or overcoat she made him get into one of the cars.

Finally, the two gravediggers and the four pallbearers, under Mr. Benson's supervision, got the overturned casket out of the hearse and they all carried it the rest of the way across the field and into the cemetery by the freshly dug grave. The mourners followed along with their heads down and their coat collars turned up to protect themselves from the sleet. The minister came last, bareheaded with an old auto robe thrown over his shoulders.

When they lowered the casket into the grave almost all the men took off their hats, even though Mr. Benson passed the word around that it wasn't necessary in the sleet.

As soon as the body was lowered everybody but the gravediggers hurried back and got into the autos. All the way back to the big house Fred couldn't help wondering if they had buried her on her face.

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