

The two men were exchanging a few final words about the weather when McVety noticed the front storm door swinging in the wind. He could even see the folded note now wedged between the sash and glass.

"By George, I forgot to close your storm door when I knocked," he said, at the same time taking a few long strides toward the house before the old man could stop him. Quickly he reached inside and tore the note off, closing the door securely in the same motion.

A minute later he was driving down the lane with the prize two-year-old leashed to the rack.

"Pretty fine guy," mused old Hally as he figured the one-hundred-and-fifteen dollars in his overalls pocket, "thoughtful enough to go back and close the door."

—DESMOND MULLALLY '59

REGISTRATION DAY

September 17, 1958, dawned bright and clear. Although this September day was supposed to be an ordinary day in autumn, it certainly was no ordinary day as far as I was concerned. For on this special day I left little Miscouche to seek my fortune in greener fields—the halls of learning at St. Dunstan's.

After meeting Sister Superior at Marian Hall, I had my first glimpse of my home for the next eight months, the small and cozy girl's residence, Marian Hall. When Sister Superior had finished dispensing the rules of the house I unpacked, and then, with an air of confidence not entirely felt, I carefully picked my way across the half-constructed road to the campus of S.D.U.

With my heart in my mouth, butterflies in my stomach, and my registration fee in my hand, I somehow mustered up my courage and managed to find the front door of the Main Building on the campus. I had heard that the boys badly outnumbered the girls at S.D.U., but I had never expected anything like this. Down a long hall and into a room (the Assembly Hall, as I was later to find out) stretched an unending line of boys of all descriptions. There were dark boys and fair boys; there were some who looked a little timid, and others who looked as if they owned the place. The worst part of this situation, however, was that I could not see one familiar face; moreover, all of those strange faces belonged to boys. There was not one girl to stand by me in this hour of need.

Somehow, I took my place at the end of the long line, and after ten minutes of looking at my shoes I finally dared to look around me. With my usual bad luck (perhaps it might turn out to be good luck) I had managed to put myself between two of the biggest Freshmen on the campus. One glance at these two six-foot monsters was enough to turn my eyes to my feet again.

Then, after a half-hour of waiting (it seemed like half a day), I came to some desks where three or four priests were waiting in comfortable chairs to receive students. Their friendly questions and sympathetic faces soon put me at my ease. Whether or not these clergymen believed in co-education was a thing I would have to find out for myself. However some of the boys behind me soon let it be known, by a whisper loud enough to be heard across the campus, that a woman's place is not in the classroom doing math., but in a kitchen washing dishes.

After paying my fees and answering all necessary questions, I was given a schedule of all classes and a list of the books I would need. Fortunately I "ran into" Father, the only priest that I knew at St. Dunstan's. He very kindly showed me around the classrooms and arranged my schedule. Had it not been for this charitable priest I probably would have looked for the library in Dal'on Hall (Yikes!!) and for the book-store in the Science Building.

After this most hectic experience in the run of such an unusual afternoon I wended my way (quite confidently now) back to Marian Hall. Here I found the four other girls in Freshman year busily unpacking their suitcases. After we were all acquainted and the others had registered, we went to the **Orphanage** for what was a well-deserved supper. We spent the evening talking and listening to the radio. At about 10:30, happy and tired, we put the lights out in the dormitory. Sleep ended with dreams, and our dreams ended on the happy note of being answered with the first of many glorious days to be spent at old S.D.U.

—PATRICIA POIRIER 61

LAST CHANCE

The state-trooper honked his horn impatiently in the driveway opposite the gas pump standing in front of the Indian souvenir shop. Garished, colored lights ran in irregular patterns from the roof of its weather-beaten front porch, where a sign, read "LAST CHANCE—NO GAS SERVICE WITHIN 200 MILES," across the yard to the walls of the shack. They stuck out like painted fingers poking into the desolate darkness that covered the New Mexico desert wastes finely divided by a thin stretch of highway. Above the island of light that defined "LAST CHANCE", eery, dark shadows flew in ever-slow weaving circles. They never touched but they always came closer to the little, pale halos of grisly light only to glide back into the murky night and be replaced by a less flagging vulture. A constant, murmuring wind had apparently made Old Tom, the half-breed, weather-proof the walls of the shack with billboards and tin signs announcing products long disappeared from the market. Desert water bags hung haphazardly, empty, on pegs of the shop's front porch. Displayed on stands of the same porch were oddly, shaped, pottery, figure carvings and trinkets and near-by colorful blankets and rugs and broad-brimmed felt hats all of primitive Indian design. Beside the old shack lay the remains of early, wrecked cars piled mutely one on top of the other as if buried together for common rotting. A sign that had red letters, "NO SMOKING—GAS BURNS", stood out on a stand which was supported from behind. It was situated near the gas pump where it would do the thoughtful motorist the most good, if he intended to obey it. The State-trooper was about to honk again when the screen door opened from the shack and out came the old half-breed, slamming the door behind. The state-trooper offered his hand.

"How are you, Tom?" The half-breed shook it.

"Fahn. Haah yeev!" He was an unkempt, rawboned, old man, dressed in greasy clothes, and behind a pair of clear glasses that clung to his parched, craggy features as if they were part of his physical make up were docile,

ancient eyes. "Wot carries you out here tonight, Officer?"

"Joe Cotton skipped out of Jackson's county jail early tonight and he's heading for the border with his girl friend."

"You mean that young feller who got riled up, and did in about a dozen poor people the other week ago?"

"Yeh! That's him. Doc Murphy examined him and called him one of those murderers without a motive."

"But how did he get out?"

"Oh! He faked a gun carved from a bar of soap and got the sheriff to hand over his car keys. Then, he locked the sheriff and his deputies in his own cell and threw the faked gun at them and took off with a double-barreled shotgun and a box of ammo. They were locked up until the sheriff's assistant came back from supper."

"Ain't he the trickiest?"

"Yes! He's tricky all right but the law of averages will catch up with him, if the Law doesn't first. There's only a chance he'll use this highway for the border. His best bet is by way of Texas. It's shorter."

"Well! It's mighty neighbourly of you to come way out here to tell me about it, Officer."

"Glad to, seeing that he's a menace. Up-state citizens have been warned to remain in-doors."

"Me and the LAST CHANCE are gonna cut it half 'n two at the end of the end of the week. Yeh! At last, I've got everything sawed, squared and painted so as to set up bed 'n board in the village."

"I don't blame you for leaving this God-forsaken place. It must be terribly lonely since your wife passed away. Say! Do you notice that there are more buzzards around here than usual?"

"Yeh! Funny. Ain't it? They usta only come when dere's some grub or carcasses here's about. Nature's Undertakers—that's what's I calls em. Them dere tourist-city people don't likes their looks. Haw! Haw!"

"That's true, Tom. The city-folk don't like their undertakers either, but they're needed nonetheless. Well! I better be on my way."

"Thanks again for comin', Officer! Help you catch that Cotton feller?"

The cruiser eased itself out of the driveway and headed south down the highway. The surrounding darkness gradually absorbed its flickering lights in the distance. Old Tom, unable to see them any longer, turned and walked up to the veranda and sat down. He did not see the faint speck of light grow as it came head-long down towards the Last Chance. He closed his eyes and dozed away. *But had he ran up the highway as he had done when he was younger and in training for long distance running, he would have seen as he had often done before . . . the faint speck become a glare, then divide itself and become . . . Two, harsh, white eyes piercing through the blackness of the shrouded highway picked up frightened, green eyed animals, glancing back as fugitives, who chanced their luck to the last second before darting away from the onrushing car.*

Inside the dark, crouching sedan that followed the animated light as a shadow, Joe Cotton lay hunched over

the wheel staring madly and wide eyed through the dirty windshield. His cruel, nervous eyes turned frightfully every now and then behind him through the only spot in the rear window that had been wiped cleanly in a circle.

"Had to jack a car without a rear view mirror. Still no dumb cops in sight, but they'll come, dose nose, stupid coppers will come soon enough for me. I'm ready for 'em." He fondled the shotgun that lay beside him in the front seat. "Ain't goin' burn". "Ain't goin' burn for no nose people who couldn't leave me and Julie be! No sir! Not this boy! Dey call me a woods-colt and not fit to marry Julie but Joey showed them. Yes sir! Dis boy did dem in good but real good!"

This time, when he glanced behind he smiled when he saw his girl friend lying cuddled in an Indian blanket in the back seat. She appeared older than her sixteen years. She woke up when the car swerved slightly, but was not wide awake enough to speak.

Up ahead a package of light came into view. It grew larger as he approached. The road was straight as the island of light came rushing to meet him. His face creased itself into a curse.

"Dammit, a roadblock", he said to the girl. He flicked off the headlights and released the steady pressure he held on the accelerator, so that the car coasted slowly towards the colored lights. "Only ten more miles to the border and den freedom, baby. Mustn't take any chances. Never a dull moment with Joey."

"When we get to Mexico you'll marry me, won't you? And you'll buy me lots of pretty dresses and things, won't you?" She sounded childish.

"Yes! Yes! Sure baby, anything you want." She leaned over and hugged him from behind the seat. He shrugged her off. "Say! It's one of those tourist souvenir shops," he told her. "And a gas pump. Just what I need! Oh boy! Had me scared for a minute." He gave a little nervous laugh. "You can't take chances in this business and live". The thought of burning to death in the electric chair came back to him. It was a thought that had played on him when he was in jail and as always it made him shiver.

He drew closer to the souvenir shop. It had a sharp name. "LAST CHANCE—NO GAS SERVICE WITHIN 200 MILES." It was a warning sign, but Cotton ignored its real significance. He blinked his myopic eyes at the gas gauge. He needed gas. Still, he probably could make the nine or so miles to the border without a refill. What about dough? He should have searched those dumb cops. He was flat broke. He looked at the warning sign again. Should he bypass it or not? The tourists must pay plenty for all that junk these stands sell. The sign did say "Last Chance" and it might be his last chance to make an easy heist. If he should get into any trouble there's always the hope of acting fast at the proper time. It was a matter of timing, like taking a step and finding a puddle of dirt underfoot, lengthening his stride quickly to a broad-jump and clearing the obstacle. Then too, he always had . . . He picked up the shotgun with his free hand and it felt heavy and strong as a good solid argument. He glanced at the warning sign again. "Last Chance" looked good to him and he thought it was very appropriate for what he intended to do.

He gunned the motor as he slipped into the driveway opposite the gas pump. Cotton saw the grisly lights, the colorful objects for sale, the old wrecked cars, the tumbling shack and the desert water bags so important for desert travel. He thought he might need some before he left this place. The danger sign stared him right in the eye, "NO SMOKING—GAS BURNS." Instead of making him aware, it acted as a stimulus. It suddenly dawned on him that he hadn't had a smoke for the full week he spent in jail. Now, he needed one badly. Next, he saw the vultures and they fitted the picture he saw of LAST CHANCE as a frame. From the veranda, Tom emerged from his snooze. His appearance was enough to convince Joe Cotton that he lived out here as a hermit. The old half-breed wore a quizzical look as he stepped up to the car.

"Say! Mister", he mumbled. "What's wrong with your lights?" He recognized that the confused driver was the young killer. He braced himself, but not so as the fugitive could see it. "How in tarnation did youse stay on the road wit out lights ta guide yeev? It sounded like a sermon.

Cotton fingered the light switch nervously until the lights came on. He glared at Old Tom. He was annoyed for he was taken off guard for a second. Julie offered to explain how they had been able to drive without the lights, but Cotton told her to shut up. Old Tom continued to act the part of not knowing the escaped killer, hoping that he might scare Cotton away. He shook his head in disgust.

"Some of yeev younstairs don't know what's what." He walked back to the gas pump and yelled back to him. "How many d'ya what?"

"Fill her up! Cotton yelled back automatically. His eyes followed the half-breed in fits to the rear of the car. This old gaffer got him good and mad. Now was the time. Joe got out of the car quickly, looked both ways down the road and before the old half-breed could look up from his job, he was surprised by the barrels of the shotgun barely inches from his eyes.

"Okay, sucker! Dis is a hold-up! Hang dat nozzel back on de pump." Tom did just that.

"Hey! Now-ow! Don't get sassy with thet darn foolish thing. I'm a poor man. I don't get it". Old Tom looked helpless and frightened. All thought of getting rid of Cotton vanished from him. His act was over. Cotton shot a glance at his girl.

"Julie, baby! Get out on de road and watch for cars and cops, will ya?" She obeyed immediately. It was just like in the movies. She was excited all over. Never a dull moment with Joey. Then, Cotton grabbed the bewildered half-breed by the back of his shirt and pushed him into his office. "Okay, Mac! Where's de cash?"

Old Tom motioned with his head to a discolored roll-top desk. Cotton gripped him again and shoved him straight for it.

"Open it!"

The old half-breed looked broken. He lifted the cover and slid it back. Inside, sitting on the desk to one side was a tall cash register embossed with an old-fashioned ornamental design. Old Tom sadly took out his keys from his pocket and from a bunch, picked one, inserting it in the till-box. He punched on a key making the machine ring

like a bell. Behind the little glass window, a small card stood up and read, "—NO SALE—". Immediately, the till-box jumped back to the sound of the tone. Joe Cotton's face dropped when he saw the take he got for all his trouble. Eight dollars! Most of it was in small change. He glared over at Tom who was the picture of discouragement. Poor Tom shook with fear.

"Eight—lousy—dollars", he roared. "What a sad dump is place turned out to be!" He filled his pockets with chocolate bars and assorted sweets from the stand behind the counter. "Hey! You! Get out dere pronto and fill dat gas tank of mine full. See!" He grabbed a handful of Mexican cigars and long wooden matches and followed Tom out to the car ringing the door behind him. The old half-breed saw that Cotton was on the verge of lighting up so he stopped his hand pumping. Cotton was leaning arrogantly against the gas pump with the shotgun under his arm when he saw Tom stop.

"Hey! I didn't say to stop."

"I can't pump gas with yeev smokin'. It's too dam dangerous. D'ya want us ta be blown ta kingdom come?" He pointed to the danger sign. Signs meant nothing to Cotton.

"Shut up!" Cotton wheeled the shotgun barrels in Old Tom's face, and screamed. "Kingdom come is where you're goin' before I'm tru' with ya." Cotton patted the shotgun he held. "De Law ain't goin' ta stop me 'cause a nobody de likes of you ain't gonna have de chance to turn me in."

He walked over to Julie who never opposed him. That's why he liked her. He liked her the night she stood by him when he shot her parents and stuffed their bodies in the incinerator. He liked the way she obeyed him. He liked the way she hung around him and tried to make him feel good when the world closed in on him so that he felt sorry for himself. He liked the way she defended him at school from the taunts of the other boys, who made fun of his bandy legs and his speech defect that made him say, "dis, dat, dease and doe." But, most of all, Julie never held it against him that he was a bastard, and she had never called him a "Woods-Colt" as the others did. Julie was different from them all; she accepted him. That's why he liked her.

Julie was standing on the other side of the car watching the antics of the vultures plane into the light and glide out slowly into the darkness. She giggled with him as they watched them take-off from the ground into the air with their characteristic hop, step and jump. He said something to her about an "Old Buzzard", and she turned with him to laugh at the old half-breed.

When Tom saw Cotton walk to the other side of the car, he withdrew the nozzle from the mouth of the gas tank. He heaved a deep sigh, keeping his head bent forward as if he was still filling the tank. He knew that Cotton would kill him as he had shot, stabbed and clubbed a dozen others to death. And, at first, he had felt fear possess him, but now that he had accepted his fate, he was no longer afraid. He saw his hands were still shaking as they had shook before he decided. He knew exactly what he was going to do. It was, as if something had clicked inside and then there was a flushing and this was the way all his fear had been cleaned away. It was too bad about the young girl but this was his only chance and she was with him all the way so probably she would not mind

sharing this with him too. It would be worth-while, even if he could save only one innocent stranger from this murderer without a motive. Yes! He would do it. He took a deep breath and blew it slowly through his nostrils.

"Julie, baby!", Cotton laughed, "your bird friends are goin' have dere favorite dish, tonite." Cotton gave Old Tom his dirtiest look. "Yeah! Chicken." Both convulsed with laughter. They were having a grand time. Julie lit Joe's cigar, when he stuck it in his mouth. He was puffing away as his head rocked with the rhythm of his effort and they were enjoying themselves immensely. She holding the long wooden match long after the cigar had turned charcoal red with the flame flickering high in their grinning faces.

Neither of them saw Old Tom raise the nozzle at that moment for he was on the other side of the car. He was deliberate in his movements. He pointed the nozzle directly at the raised flame before their faces and with his other hand drove the hand pump to its highest pressure. The gasoline sprayed squarely at their faces and for a moment nothing happened. It wiped the smile off their faces. "Poor" Joe blinked his moist eyes. "Poor" Julie gave a weak smile of stupid disbelief. Old Tom, no longer feeling poorly, went placidly on with his job of hosing them. Both "POORS" made an attempt to run.

And, then, it happened. The murky desolateness of the New Mexico desert wastes for miles around was suddenly lighted up, brighter than day, by the flashing roar of orange colored light and scorching heat. Then, poor Julie and Joe their clothes ablaze, their young, bulging eyes standing out of their sockets, their faces contorted in the awful agony of pig-screaching screams, pitched about the driveway like bouncing balls. Cotton trying desperately for that "LAST CHANCE", that would save him, hit the gas pump head on; and the gas reservoir below the ground exploded like a big gong heaping all three sacrificial victims heavenward. "Poor" Joe Cotton had no idea what part of the world he was on at this moment. But, of the voice of Particular Judgement from a great distance, he was certain he heard Old Tom, the half-breed cry out, "Those signs have meanin' 'Mister WOODS-COLT',—Sir! Yeeew shoulda paid heed t'dem. They're thar fir yer own good. Dat dere sign did say, "NO SMOKING—GAS BURNS", didn't it?"

—LOUIS REDDY '58

Usually those who have nothing to say contrive to spend the longest time in doing it.

"Don't worry" is better advice if you add the word "others".

THE DREAM AND ESTEEM OF THE "COMMIE" REGIME

Here is a story, strange as it seems, Of Stalin the Commie wrapped up in his dreams. Being tired of the British, he lay in his bed And 'mongst many things, dreamt he was dead. He was stretched right out and lying state, His bushy moustache was frozen with hate. Then, being dead, he figured life's cost And found his passport to the next world he'd lost.

He passed from this land called earth, Went straight to this Golden Gate of mirth. But Peter called out in a voice loud and clear "Stalin the Commie, you can't come in here." Then Stalin turned round and away he did go To find his abode in the region below.

Satan, looking out from his lofty watch-tower, Exclaimed, "Ye gods, I'll lose my power!" "O Satan," cried Stalin, "What you said I do know, But give me a corner—I've no place to go" "Comrade, I'll tell you straight and I'll tell you clear, We're just too good for you down here!" He kicked Stalin back and vanished in smoke, And just at that moment "Red Joe" awoke. He bounced right up in a lather of sweat, "Alas," he roared, "Tis my worst dream yet! To Heaven I'll not go—that I can tell, But it's damned awful thing to be kicked out of Hell!"

—RICHARD ST. JOHN '58

We try to see some good in everyone we meet, but occasionally there are some people who make us realize our eyesight isn't as good as it used to be.

When people complain of life, it is usually because they have asked impossible things of it.

THE FORGOTTEN HERO

As Mark Hilton limped along the corridor of Rossville Junior College, his eyebrows were drawn together in a deep, forbidding frown, and he seemed oblivious to his surroundings.

"Hi Mark", greeted Jackie Matthews, friendly and cheerful as always.

"Hi," Mark's reply was almost a growl.

"Ready for your interview?" inquired Jackie.

"Sure." It was more like a bark this time.

"Well, if that's how you feel about it, I'm sorry I asked," the other boy shrugged, started away, and then said over his shoulder, "Let me give you a tip, Mark. Don't bark at that reporter the way you are at me. Bad publicity for the college."

Mark stopped short and glared at his retreating back, then turned, and entered the glass-panelled door bearing the information, Student Council Office. He slammed it smartly behind him, and, depositing his sheaf of papers on the already over-burdened desk, he limped to the window which overlooked the football field. As he watched the team having a practice session, his frown seemed to cut a still deeper furrow in his brow, his fists clenched, and his thoughts became rebellious.

"Why did it have to happen to me? I'm always the unlucky one. Here I am with this game leg when I should be out there, too. What did I ever do to deserve this? It's not fair."