

THE NUT THAT HELD THE WHEEL

It was a beautiful night for a party. The sky was cloudless and the moon and stars seemed to dance and join in the sprit which we would exhibit when we assembled to hold our annual club party. Everything seemed to be going in the right direction. The motor of the car was humming so steadily that even it seemed to want to get to the destination in a hurry. Everyone in the car was singing and joking in a jovial way.

At last we came to the place where we were to have our party. It was a house which the club had rented for the night and we had a canteen and dining room arranged in it. We were going to dance in a large room which had formerly been the parlor.

When we entered the yard, other teen-agers came out of the house to welcome us. They had arrived earlier and were getting everything in readiness for the party. The eight of us got out of the car and joined our friends. Upon entering the house, one could see the multi-colored lights and decorations, and hear the strains of music which were drifting from the record player in the parlor. Everything was in order.

"Gee," I thought, "if my parents could only see this, would they be thrilled? Or perhaps they would be angry at me for taking the car and coming here with this gang."

"Oh, well; I'm here now and I'll just make the best of it," I persuaded myself.

A few of us approached the canteen for a couple of beers. We stayed there for a considerable time sipping our potent liquids and seeing who could tell the tallest tale concerning some of our former experiences.

We then returned to our partners and escorted them to the parlor to dance. We were feeling somewhat happy as a result of our beers and we really danced in a spirited way. The entire night was spent in sing-songs, trips to the canteen, dancing, and to put the finishing touches on it, we had a big lunch. In spite of the merry time I was having I gradually becoming groggy.

After lunch some one mentioned to me that it was time for us to go home. Go home! What would my parents say if they saw me in this state? My friends kept urging me to come home, so finally I groped through my pockets for the keys and we started for the car. It was parked in front of the house, and I had some trouble keeping away from the trees while getting out through the driveway. Everything was coming towards me. I would not admit that I was not able to drive. But I realized that I must get the car home some way.

I turned onto the pavement and started in the direction of home. There was nothing on the road and I began to press my big foot on the accelerator. I heard some one counting "forty—fifty—sixty—seventy". I thought they were trying to go to sleep by counting sheep.

There was a thick haze before my eyes through which I could discern oncoming headlights. Suddenly, someone in the back seat screamed; I gave the wheel a quick turn and everything seemed to turn topsy-turvy before my eyes. There was a crashing sound and broken glass struck my face. I heard some blood-curdling shrieks from the occupants of the back seat. Then everything seemed to stop. I felt a sharp pain shooting through my right shoulder.

The next thing I knew there was a number of men, including a policeman, prying open the doors of the car. Afterwards in the hospital, although I couldn't realize it because of the intense pain from my broken shoulder, it was reported that two of our number had broken legs, one had a broken arm, another had a fractured skull and two others were fortunate to escape with only minor injuries. Somehow this only accounted for seven of the group.

In the headlines of the morning paper these words blazed before my eyes, "One Killed Instantly, Seven Injured in Car Accident Last Night". And at that place on the road now stands a sign which reads, "One Killed Here."

—RUSSEL McINNIS '56.

That old bald cheater, Time.

—Ben Johnson.