

He told Bruce about Herman, the tap on the shoulder, and the cigarette.

"It must be true. You're shaking like a leaf. Better take a couple from the drug cabinet. Nobody'll ever know. Here, a cup of good coffee will do you good."

They sat there for a long time, saying nothing, staring at one another, thinking. Bruce finally spoke, hesitantly, almost fearfully, "You want me to finish the check?"

"We both better go. It might do me good to go back there right away."

The two went down the corridor. Herman was sitting on one of the toilets finishing his cigarette. He gave them a half smile and Bruce eyed his companion curiously, saying nothing. They finished quickly and returned to the lunch, cold by this time. Whenever another trip to the dorm was necessary, Bruce carried a stout window stick and Louie kept a tight grip on the flashlight. He had been badly scared, still was, and did not care who knew. Bruce was not taking any chances either. The thought of what could have happened if Herman had had the knife in his hand was enough to sober them both.

In the morning, Louie told Linda when she reported for duty what had happened that night. Never had he ever received a reprimand like the one she so ably gave him. He said nothing. What could he say, knowing as he did that such a mistake as he had made could have very well cost him his life.

Finally, running out of words, she calmed down and added softly, "The knife has been found."

He stared at her in stunned disbelief.

"Yes. We found it yesterday after dinner . . . In Herman's mattress . . ."

—GERARD TINGLEY, '60

HOMECOMING

Peter Randal stood in the high wind of the large June day. The sky was cloudless, and only on the edges of the hills of the bay below, could be seen that summer haze which gave name to the wind, a smokey Sou-western. The short, clipped grass at his feet shook viciously in the gusts. His long gaunt face was worn and pale; long untidy wisps of hair, blond and wavy fluttered like sails in the breeze. Peter Randal was tall and thin, his shirt flagged about his body, giving evidence that he had once been a much heavier man. The hands that were held loose behind his back were heavily veined, furrowed like the clay in the late fall, clay that awaited the seeds of spring.

All about him, crosses and headstones rose like a short-cropped forest of rock; some of them were old, fallen and broken with years of frost and heat and wind; they were the tombs of the forgotten, remembered in prayers only on All Saints' Day. Peter's clear blue eyes were looking at one headstone, a now polished marble monument, set aside from the road which ran round the grassy mounds of Mount Calvary cemetery and out onto the highway, busy with the traffic of the mid-afternoon. The monument was simple, no pretensions about it, somewhat like the man buried beneath it. He felt like smashing his huge, heavy boot into the whiteness of the marble, the last material reminder to him of Howard Green.

"You can't hurt the dead", he muttered bitterly.

A small dog running ahead of a young boy carrying a bunch of dirty flowers in his hands, caught his eye and distracted him from his thoughts. The sun came out from behind a cloud and sent a soft shadow of the High Cross over the ground. The boy knelt down on a grave and was laying the flowers at its foot, while the dog stood patiently by.

His thoughts again collected, Peter began to back in years. He did not like to; it made him feel bitter, and though he drew a certain pleasure from this feeling, he knew it was not proper.

"Ten years", he thought, "ten years buried in a prison, ten years lost. My best years lost. My best years. Why? Why, God? Can you tell me why? Maybe he knows." He cast a glance at the grave.

"Why did he remain silent at my trial? He must have known where the money had gone. God! What gets into men? What makes them act the way they do? If he wanted money why didn't he come to me for a loan? I was his friend. I could have gotten it." His whole body began to shake, and bitter tears welled up in his eyes.

"How do you forgive a man a thing like that?" he queried. He could still hear the words of the prison chaplain, words that seemed to him now as extremely wise.

"It may be hard; you may not like nor feel up to it, but you must forgive. Maybe there is some reason hidden from everybody. How are you to know he didn't suffer over it the rest of his life? Leave the reckoning in the hands of God."

"Ah! forgive. It sounds like sieve, empty and desolate holding nothing."

The dog rubbing against his legs startled him out of his thoughts. He looked at the sad, mellow eyes of the brute and smiled.

"How like a child a dog is", he mused.

"You like my dog?" a childish voice asked. Peter turned to see the smiling face of the boy.

"Yes, he's a nice dog. What's his name?"

"I call him Jimbo; Everybody else calls him 'Bo'." He smiled again.

"What's your name, young man?"

"I'm Martin, Martin Power; what's yours, mister?"

"I'm Pe . . . ah, Pat Sullivan," he lied.

"Oh! That your friend?" the lad asked pointing to the grave.

"I guess you can say we had something in common," he said. "Whom do you visit?"

Pointing at the grave he had just visited, the lad said: "That's a fellow was driving the car the night my sister was killed. My sister's boy-friend. It was a year ago today. Daddy doesn't know I came here. He'd beat me if he did. He hates him."

"For killing your sister?"

"Yeh. He didn't really mean it. I know he didn't. He was a good guy . . .

. . . Was he a good guy?" he asked nodding towards the grave.

Peter sighed. "I . . . I suppose he was . . . in his own way."

"I gotta go, mister. Nice meeting you. You want a flower for your friend?" He held out a crushed yellow dandelion flower in his dirty hand.

"Thank you. Thank you very much." Peter said: "Be a good lad."

"Sure! Bye."

The wind had died as dusk was falling. The harsh clank of the gate echoed over the still graveyard. Peter Randal walked off down the side walk, up High street, down Pleasant, 'round the corner of Pleasant onto Charles and stopped before 135, a quaint looking bungalow.

A tall boy came out the door and put his arm around him and walked up the path.

"Everything O.K. Pop? You look kinda tired."

"I'm O.K., son. Everything's fine, just fine."

"Mom's got a chicken cooked. Real good having you home, Pop."

Peter Randal smiled as he ruffled his son's hair.

"Good to be home, son," and the door closed behind him.