

"I've never seen a stack like it", she smiled, and her words urged him to work harder.

The stack mounted higher and higher. He got up on top of it, and his back ached as he looked towards Rammocky and measured with his eyes the size of their turf stacks. "I've beat you all", he said, and he jumped to the ground and sat on an upturned basket, gazing proudly at his own large stack of turf. He pulled his shirt from below his sweater and wiped the sweat from his face. His eyes turned suddenly to the sea, and he saw his father's fishing boat with her nose high out of the water. He looked up at the chimney of the house and saw no smoke coming out. He rushed into the house. The fire was out, and the kettle was cold. He rummaged into his schoolbag, tore leaves out of an old scribbler, lay before the fire-place, and piled peat turf around the crumpled paper. He got to his feet, lit the fire, and soon pure, thick smoke rolled up the chimney. He ran to the spring well with a pail for water, the dew on the grass brushing coldly against his feet. The boat was nearly in, but he would surely have the kettle boiled in time. He went into the house, filled the kettle, and got it ready to heat. He then got down on his knees, and kept blowing at the fire. He arose wearily, and went across to the bedroom where he instinctively thrust himself upon the soft bed. When his father came in, he left his string of wet fish on the porch bench, and went over to lift off the boiling kettle. He noticed Kevin lying across the bed and shook him gently: "Kevin, son, are you asleep?"

Kevin didn't hear him. His mind was whirling round like a wheel—a glittering wheel that grew and grew until it lost itself in darkness. His mind grew dark, and out of the darkness arose the turf stack. It grew bigger until it looked like a mountain. He saw it waver, and his raving mind burst into speech: "It's going to fall on me... Hold it back!" He clutched at the air and then felt a cold hand upon his forehead. "It's me, Kevin. Don't be frightened, son, you're only dreaming", said his father.

The boy opened his eyes in a vacant gaze, and his father raised his head from the pillow and, putting a bowl of milk before him, said: "Take this and you'll be all right, son. You're weak with the hunger".

Kevin sipped the milk slowly, and when he had finished he lay back on the pillow and fell deeply asleep.

When morning came he lay in bed dreamily looking around. Seeing the boy awake, his father came in dressed in his Sunday clothes. "And how's my little man this morning?", he said.

"I'm all right now, daddy Did you see my turf stack?"

"Did I see it! Of course, I did. And it was the whole talk of the people on their way home from Mass this morning".

—RICHARD ST. JOHN '58

THE DEAL

"There's old Hally Coffin's place. Guess I'll give him a try," thought Pius, as his one-ton maroon truck bounced along the frozen rough road that ran through Chepstow. The driver wondered for a moment why he picked this road to travel on today. But he soon came to

the conclusion that all the dirt roads were equally bad at this time of year, for it was early November and the north-west winds that blew in off the Gulf weren't exactly the Nassau type.

Pius McVety was a cattle buyer, and honest kind of guy at least he tried to be. He was a lanky fellow, and spoke with a slight drawl which made him feel and sound like a Southerner.

He was almost opposite Hally Coffin's house now. Before turning into the lane leading up to the residence, the driver gave the spread a quick glance through the side window of his truck. Coffin, he noticed, had a rather prosperous looking place, though moderate in size. The buildings were situated on a slight northerly slope. From the appearance, one got the impression that it was the product of many years of thrift—conservatively equipped, perhaps, but lacking no essentials.

"Doesn't seem to be much activity here," McVety thought, as he started up the lane. "I'll go in anyway. The old guy's probably in the cellar grading potatoes."

A hollow bang resounded when Pius slammed the truck door in Hally Coffin's yard. He regarded the barn and noticed that every door was closed from the outside. An absence of smoke at the flue top indicated a similar state of vacancy. McVety went to the door and tapped on the glass panel of the inner door. There was no answer. Pius closed the door.

"Nothing but the sky and the grass," he said, smiling to himself. "Oh well, I'll see what he's got anyway."

He went into the stable, snapped on the light, and closed the door behind him. A beautiful herd of Ayrshire cattle met his first glance. After looking over the stock for a few moments from where he stood, he began to stroll up the aisle.

"They sure are fine looking cattle," he thought. "Well looked after too. Bill wood asked me to pick up a milker, something like that, for him. I'd give Coffin two twenty-five for that animal. They're all pure breeds, too, I guess. Really not a poor animal in the barn."

McVety was about to light up a smoke when he recalled where he was. Putting the cigarette back into the pack he proceeded to examine the rest of the animals. This he did rather rapidly, until he came to a white heifer in the far end of the stable.

"Sure is a beautiful animal," he thought, "best cow in the barn. Ought to make a good milker in a few years. Should be able to bet a hundred and sixty for her at the auction next week."

After sizing up the animal for a few minutes Pius started back to the door, glancing again at each one of the heard and comparing them to his choice at the back of the stable. He flicked off the light and came out of the barn, closed the door and turned the wooden knof till it was horizontal. He crossed the yard and was getting into the truck when he checked himself. Taking a sheet of paper from a small notebook he leaned on the hood of his truck and wrote:

I'll give you \$140 for that white heifer
in the far end of the stable.

Will call back next week.

P. McVety.

He walked quickly to the house, and opened the outside door and put the note between the glass and sash of the second door. Turning, he gave the storm door a quick push and hurried back to the truck.

"That rack is still empty," he thought, "and it's eleven o'clock."

He had just turned the truck and was entering the lane when he noticed Coffin driving up in his '38 Chev.

"Might make a deal yet," he thought, as he backed his truck up a few yards to let the old farmer in.

When Coffin had put his car in the garage he came to the front of the barn to speak to the buyer.

"Good-day, McVety," greeted the farmer.

"How do you do?" the buyer replied politely.

"You haven't been in these parts for some time."

"No, guess I haven't."

"What's wrong? Our cattle not good enough?"

"No, the cattle have always been good in these parts, Hally. You've developed a mighty fine herd since I was here last."

"They're not too much better. Had a mixed herd when you were here before, that's all. These are all Ayrshires."

"They've increased in number, too, eh?"

"Ya, guess I've got about ten more than before. A queer lot of work though, to take care of a herd like this. A guy hasn't got much time for anything else."

"Planning on selling any this fall, Hally?"

"Ya, I've got to sell, Pius. Haven't got enough hay to keep them going till May. Had to take them in pretty early this fall; there was frost early in October."

"There's a lot of people like yourself this fall, Hally, not too much hay anywhere."

"Not even enough right here, replied the farmer."

The two men were in the middle of the stable now looking at a five-year-old milch cow.

"I'll sell you that cow now, Pius. She had the second highest test on the Island for Ayrshires last year. Her calves are worth a lot."

"Might consider taking her later, Hally, but not today. Mr. Wood did ask me to pick up a milker for him. He doesn't want anything that good though."

The buyer made his way to the rear of the stable as they continued the conversation. Pointing to the white heifer, he said,

"What do you figure you'd take for this two-year-old, Hally?"

"Oh, don't know exactly. She's the best animal I've got. The best prospect anyway. What's she worth to you?"

"Pretty nice animal all right. You put a price on her and I'll see if I can come up to it."

"Well, I got ninety-five dollars for another one this summer—not quite as good an animal as this one. Guess I'd settle for a hundred and twenty for her," said the owner.

"She's worth one hundred to me," put in the buyer quickly.

"A hundred dollars!" repeated Coffin. "No I'll not sell her for a hundred. Those pure-breds are too hard to raise and care for to go giving them away when they're two years old."

"Ya, but they're only cattle after all," said Pius.

"They're the very best of cattle. That's the way I look at it," contended Coffin quickly. "You try to buy the very best of anything today and see what you'll pay for it."

"She's kind of small, though, for a two-year-old," Pius argued.

"That don't make any difference," replied Hally, "her mother was small like that and she's about the best milker I have. I can show you her records."

"No need to do that, Hally," McVety replied, retaining his firmness. "I'll go half way with you then—a hundred and ten it'll be."

"One-hundred-and-ten dollars for two years of caring for an animal! At that rate it would take twenty-five of those to buy a car nowadays. I tell you, McVety, if we put our prices up every time the merchants did, you'd need a queer lot of money to buy out this stock—even a few of them."

"Well, Hally, I just might want to be doing that before the winter's out. And just to assure your patronage I'm going to give you a hundred-and-fifteen for this animal."

The old man reluctantly agreed, and before long McVety had his prize on the truck.

"Guess you'll be wanting the registration papers," Hally said, "I'll bring them out."

He went around the house and entered by the back door. "What a deal," McVety said to himself, "a hundred-and-fifteen dollars." Then he recalled the note he had placed on the door. "This is my chance," he thought.

He took a step toward the front door, but just then Coffin reappeared with the papers.

"There they are," Hally said, handing them to the buyer.

Pius took the papers, looked for a moment at the first sheet, then folding them, he put them in his shirt pocket.

On hearing a long bawl from the cow stable Coffin remarked that the cattle had not been watered this morning.

"Gotta fix that electric engine and get some water pumped up for the lot. I got a part for it in town this morning. Lost a lot of time, too. Had to go to three different garagemen before I got it," Hally said.

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,