

C198627

time flies, Rusty. *Tempus fugit*, you know, as you and I learned in school. Yes, Melvin Rust is twenty-six, and he is now Captain Melvin Rust, chief aide and counselor to General MacArthur himself. He is in Tokyo, Japan, Rusty. There's a letter from him in Miss Norton's office that tells us all about it. Miss Norton is so impressed that she's having copies made of it for everyone, and one will be read aloud at dinnertime. He wrote her only because he didn't know whether you were here or at 14 Vine Street, and, though he was modest about himself, it's easy enough to see just how important Melvin is. Why, Rusty, that letter is clearly marked: *General MacArthur's Headquarters, Tokyo, Japan*. Rusty, can you believe it? That nephew of yours who set fire to Snooks and got sick on your apple dowdy?"

Mrs. Rust sat up very straight and began to unwind her curlpapers.

"Well, I never did!" she said. "That Melvin! I must say it's a surprise. Is that war still going on? I thought there were those V-Days long ago when we had ice cream and hung out the flag."

"There's always a war going on somewhere," Emma Davis said. She stopped for the fraction of a second to savor this grim truth in her own mind; but she couldn't stop long, for-