

a furnished executive suite, with deep piled wall-to-wall carpet, done out in a décor whose colour was basically cigarette-ash grey, relieved by Pall Mall red. Stadium-sized desk, glass surfaced. Penholder, paperweight, glass ashtray. Leather swivel chair for the host, two trim guests seats.

Our only improvisation had been to bring in two extra chairs and set up a card table in the middle of the suite. It was a well beat-up, heavily marked table, more amendable to our tastes than the stadium desk.

JM had left the company more than a month ago, and the suite had gone vacant. We used the suite for its wide windows, which when opened in the afternoon, gave a refreshingly cool, if somewhat dry, breeze.

The suite looked directly down into a line of small, picket-fenced back yards behind a solid wall of squalid apartment houses. A long alley ran the whole length of our building, and the line of yards.

Fred Hayes was already there. He had allocated for himself the big chair, which had been brought out around the side of the desk, and had stuck his feet up on another chair.

A cool, but as I said, dry breeze was wafting through the open window, and greeted me as I entered the open doorway.

"Hi, Fred," I said. "How's it going?"

He shrugged, but not despondently. "Why ask?" The cool breeze made one feel drowsy and timeless. A bright afternoon filled the suite with light and warm wind. I sauntered over to the window and leaned with both elbows on the broad sill. I looked down into the yards below. Three or four lines of sheets, dazzling white, were blowing like the wind-flown sails of an old rigger ship.

Pete ambled in, and after an indifferent glance at Fred, who paid no attention to him anyway, joined me at the sill.

"Ahhh," he sighed. "God, to get away from that desk. I feel I've worked a hundred hours."

I was looking almost straight below us, into one of the small yards. A small boy, with navy cut hair, was playing by himself on a small tricycle, with no

place to go. His yard was rectangular, becoming overrun with dandelions. Two dusty birch trees, which leaned across the fence, provided shade. He must have been about three or four.

"A hundred hours my ass," rumbled Fred, gazing blankly out the doorway, cupping his hands behind his neck.

Alfred entered the doorway. I turned and saw him waiting.

Pete turned around sharply at Fred, but Fred had prudently lapsed into silence.

"OK, what'll it be?" Alfred now addressed our assembly.

The yard right below us was at the back of a dilapidated, brick house. A veranda covered with graveled roofing paper was nailed to the house.

Suddenly three women clad in

## Chit Chat

Spring cleaning  
Dresser drawers  
What shall we find?

Old letters  
An odd earring  
Want this penny?

Postage stamps  
Broken watchstrap  
Leave that alone!

Bobby pins  
A string of beads  
You can have that.

by K. M. MINOR

## A Poem

Now.  
Some times  
the were-nevers of yesterday  
cast their shadows  
over the when-evers  
of tomorrow,  
all now seems dark.

Yet  
leaf-fall and snow-fall  
are not now forever  
but forever is now.

If  
there be light  
in the ever-now  
let me stand in the sun-fall.  
by JOSEPH JONES

night gowns came out of the house, carrying blankets. Pete saw them just as I did.

"Well," he said to the warm afternoon breeze.

Fred ordered for all of us. Tom Whittaker appeared and sent Alfred speedily on his way. "Hurry up with those long legs of yours before we all evaporate and die."

A rather ticklish, pleasant sensation wormed up through me as I looked interestedly down.

"Whores," Pete said. "Come here and see three whores," he said to Tom. I glanced towards Fred.

The four of us couldn't get in the window at once. After an unanimated race to the window, Tom squeezed in beside me, pinning me in the middle.

"Oh," Tom murmured, gazing mildly down. "But my God," he said. "What ugly looking women!"

The three of them had spread out their blankets on the uncut grass, and were lying down. One with fawnish-blonde hair brushed out until it looked just short of electrified, was dressed in a filmy negligee. She was lying on her side, her pale white arms and shaven legs in the sun. She looked like a broken, but living, doll, that had been tossed on the ground from a height.

"I've never seen such ugly women," Fred said over my shoulder.

"Aren't they ugly, though?" asked Tom.

"Well — " We hesitated. "That one in the middle," eyed Fred appraisingly. "She doesn't look so bad. In the dark." He was studying the girl in the blue, thin bathrobe that veed down her chest. "What do you think, Pete?" She was on her back, running her fingers up and down the edge of the robe. I was sure she knew we were watching her. Occasionally she ran her hand through her straight black hair. It was bristly, almost like a porcupine's, I thought.

"She's younger than the other two," I said weightfully.

"Yeah," Tom agreed. "There's no question. How old do you think they are?" he asked Fred. Pete coughed. "Whores. That

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