



on second thought

—Peter Outhit

CULTURAL DISCOVERIES

The choicest slot in Vaudeville is the next-to-closing spot, so by rights I should load this space with thoughtful homilies readers can carry with them long after Atwood has collected the perused Gazettes to paper his canteen shelves. Instead I think I'll slip in three diverse and, I hope, not altogether meaningless items that have burdened my desk drawer for several weeks. "With malice toward none" as they say.

The first is an intercepted TIME story on the Student Council elections, and we'll assume TIME publisher Henry Luce doesn't like the Dalhousie Student Government.

Report from Dalhousie

Leering, litigious, licentious Bill (Sonny) Dickson, the gaunt grasping strongman of tiny (pop. 2053), rural (Halifax, N. S.) Dalhousie University student circles, stood up in a smoke-filled, closed-door session of the Students' Representative Council one day last week and snarled his defiance to the voting populace of his rebellious domain in the wake of its decision to obliterate his reign.

The vote (elsewhere in this issue) clearly indicated the titan's days were numbered. "We want Dickson!" hundreds of bearded insurgents screamed outside the bullet-shattered windows of the scarred university's crumbling Arts building even as he spoke.

Many had predicted the fall. As recently as two short months ago 17 of the strongman's closest former allies—among them eleven Council highups—fled the toppling tyranny in the fact of bloodthirsty retributive measures that had backwashed the abortive Dickson tenure.

But Dickson's final savage, desperate attempt to wield the remains of his self-appointed authority tipped the dictator's hand on the future of the swaying Dickson - Cudmore tyranny as his obtuse and divided government tottered into bankruptcy.

Signs of strain were also showing the D.G.D.S., weak-sister Council agency which depends almost wholly upon the handouts of free-spending councillors for its existence. Last week, that existence seemed fragile indeed.

Cudmore, Dickson's alter ego-turned-enemy in office had disappeared days before under sinister and mysterious circumstances. Few doubted that he was a suicide, victim of his partner's lust for one-man power. As for Dickson, last week's performance pointed only one way.

The world awaited the end.

The second speaks for itself. The scene: Dalhousie.

The Last Angry Artsman

The five of them were slumped in somber array against a chipped, stained canteen table.

"... get anything out of that last period? The guy was out in left field for me—I mean, what the hell, I can always feed back his notes... you don't have to know the stuff."

"Yeah. Mid-March already. Man, I'm tired. Tired of this bloody university, tired of classes... feel like takin' off and heading west."

"Know what you mean. Nothing looks good—who's the blond chick?"

"Dunno. I've seen her around, but hell, the women I know wouldn't be worth remembering."

"You got a summer job yet?"

"Nope. Have to get going on that pretty soon, I guess... you see the last hockey game?"

"Nope. Saw one before Christmas. What a bunch of deadbeats. I could do better on roller skates. We shouldn't have entered anything."

"There's one consolation — you're only around here a couple of years anyway, so it doesn't matter whether we win or lose."

"I suppose... did you see the Gazette this week?"

"Yeah, glanced at it... it's goin' downhill as fast as the rest of this university. Be glad to get my degree and clear outa here."

"Gotta cut out. Skating tonight or are you going to pound the books?"

"I dunno. Went skating last week but the ice was lousy. I damn near drowned in the slush. Probably study."

"Yeah. Well... we'll see ya tomorrow."

"Sure."

Suddenly the table is deserted. In the background, there is the monotonous murmur of voices punctuated occasionally by the too-hysterical shriek of a freshette.

FADEOUT

Now that were all depressed, the last item might be entitled "Spring Fever". Then, again, it might not.

Oh, for a spellbinding, sensuous siren
Or to have been Byron,
Or the distant enchantment of Radio City
And a life lived blatenly and openly like Errol Flynn
or in secret like Walter Mitty;
In untrammelled freedom where the pungent adverb
is no longer worrisome,
And plenty of extras to make me feel blurrishome
Oh, for that soft-stealing stupor whose wings lift you far—
Like during a Strauss waltz or a speech by Kerr—
With no "campus activities" or "the cafeteria"
Words which never seemed drearier,
Than to sit here all day and ponder the wall
That separates the Gazette Office from the Pharos Office
and the Pharos Office from the hall.

"Sir, I pulled your daughter out of the water and resuscitated her."
"Then, by George, you'll marry her!"

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DGDS and the Wonderful Swing:

One Hundred Easy Ways to Win a Man

by BETTY ARCHIBALD

Despite the dire omen of Tuesday night's "dress rehearsal" version of *Wonderful Town*, the final performances overflowed with a cast gaiety that quickly communicated itself from the self-assured villagers on stage to an audience whose laughter and tapping feet left no doubt that the music, the dialogue, and the dancing left little to be desired.

The social satire spilled over eventually into the inevitable remark from the architect who was fired for designing the new Men's Residence. But there also on hand, to be ridiculed by self-assured and polished comedians, the various delightful immoralities of the Lost Generation, sexual deviations from convention being perhaps the most satirised: Helen, who got an unpleasant surprise from the doctor; Violet, who had nightly, and profitable, callers, and even the shy drug-store clerk who managed to get in a proposition.

Dramatic Medley

The play opened with a carefully co-ordinated introduction to the eccentric characters who were to form an effective contrast to the three norms of behaviour around whom the plot generally revolved. Yet, even the unusual characters fitted readily together in a Greenwich Village that absorbed from the very first scene artistic landlords, drunks unaware that Violet had moved, the heppiest of all hep nightclub owners, leering lovers, and Irish cops.

Only the Conga line of Brazilian cadets stood away from the unity provided by the village background, but the hilarity of the scenes of their enthusiastic love for the dance and even more energetic love for girls and bed overcame sufficiently the incongruity of their being mixed up in the action in the first place. Their contagious vivacity and the expert rhymical movements that accompanied it produced one of the two or three really memorable moments in the entire production.

The dramatisations of Ruth's "clean fine," "squalid" and theatrical attempts at the short story were brilliantly conceived parodies of the worst of the average American novel or play, as the lovers in the jungle were superseded by the lovers in the slums by the lovers in the theatre.

Also particularly outstanding was Carol Ann Coulson's excellently choreographed presentation of the *Swing*; quick-moving and very much man-oriented routines by black-tighted and tight-dressed dancers gave the audience yet another taste of Janet Murray's long blond hair, long black legs, and



slow, slow hips that became proverbial by the end of the evening.

Innocent Sex

The young, wide-eyed, and innocent (save for her awareness of an appeal that enabled her to get free meals at the local drugstore) Eileen, played by Peggy Mahon, conveyed a delicately fragile air of needing attention from the nearest man that blended well with Penelope Stanbury's more sophisticated and slightly cynical Ruth.

The central image of the small-town girl somewhat bewildered by the big city's overt immorality was surprisingly convincingly conveyed by the mingling of the attractive voices in the longing verses of "Ohio", a scene that achieved sentimentality without making its participants look uncomfortable.

Huw Williams was perhaps the most natural, and certainly one of the most genuinely appealing characters of the assorted group of drunks, policemen, lechers, and other admirers of the two leading figures. In pleasant contrast to the crew of men interested in Eileen (for which one could hardly blame them), with not entirely ethical intentions, as they looked over her tight dresses and curly hair, Huw quietly and convincingly won Ruth with warm affection and a talented voice.

A Rambling Wreck

Dave ("the hairiest madam I ever saw") Brown proved conclusively that weeks of rehearsal are unnecessary for a polished performance. On hilariously funny legs, the "Rambling Wreck" from Trenton Tech" instantaneously endeared himself to the comic sensibilities of the audience. Smooth, quick leaps that were entertaining in themselves and an indelible charm assisted in making some otherwise soggy, flat lines come alive to a voice instinctively captivating and amusing.

The effect of the numerous sharply broken-up scenes was at first disconcerting; the vitality and vigour of the first scene was dissipated somewhat during the interval between it and the following action.

Few Flaws

Also technically at fault was the lighting of the scrim while the sets were being changed; the audience was able to make out a little too clearly the shadows of backstage workers. However, the effect of a break was slightly minimised by not closing the curtain proper, and the elaborate and appropriately functional sets proved to be well-worth the few minutes' pause. The slight gap in the action became necessary as the swift movements and comic possibilities of each scene left the audience gasping for breath and with laughter.

Despite an overall excellence, the action in a few scenes proved to be somewhat weak. Some stage business involving a chef and a delivery boy in the scenes in the backyard was wholly unnecessary, contributing nothing to the exposition of the plot, and having no merit in itself.

A few song sequences lacked natural movement; particularly noticeable in this respect was Eileen's duet with Bob. However, the overall pace and co-ordinated stage action and dancing made one hear with astonishment that the same musical flopped earlier this year at another Canadian university.

Frivolity

Although the show boasts no memorable songs and contains only one exciting dance, the *Swing*, (though Eileen's Irish jog was enjoyable) the orchestra under George Naylor, who clearly enjoyed himself to the full, provided a spirited and only occasionally too noisy background to the frivolous gaiety that characterized the production.

From Dave Brown on the ironing board to the village swingers, from Eileen's gentle voice and charming shyness, to Ruth's Neon "Vortex" sign placed in a noticeably prominent position, *Wonderful Town* set a high-talent mark that will require considerable imagination, ingenuity, and skilled directing and producing in all angles to equal for some time.

LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS