

mentioning street names north of Bathurst and Wilson. The wino said he hoped they had lots of garbage cans up there, because there was a God-awful pile of asswipe in the truck. One of the old men said it would take them 'til four o'clock to finish all these. That suited Leo fine, the longer they worked the more they'd be paid. The wino said he could finish his in five minutes. 'Blondie' said they'd better finish them by three because he had somewhere to go at four.

Leo looked at his watch. It was already 7:30 and they had done nothing. If the rest of the day went as easily as this, he told himself, he would be back tomorrow for more of the same. By the time they reached their first street the truck was nice and warm. 'Blondie' pulled over to the curb and turned to face them, grinning. The wino said, "It ain't gonna be me." "Awwww George," said 'Blondie', twisting his face into sympathy. He snapped back to a grin. "Okay, who's gonna be first?" 'Blondie' looked from one to the other. The sullen guy started to move. "I'll go first." "Okay." 'Blondie' got out with the map and explained where the sullen guy, whom he called 'Chuckles,' was to deliver. Then he pointed to one of the last two guys, who were buddies, and told him to go with 'Chuckles.' The guy looked at his buddy, but got out of the truck without saying anything.



When the men were outside, they opened the back doors of the truck and 'Blondie' asked for a couple of satchels without holes in them. They were handed a couple of good satchels and the rest of the men including Leo, took the cue to choose good satchels themselves. Then the driver told them to break a bundle of both kinds of handbill and give fifty of each to the men who were going to start first. When that was done and the men stood ready with their satchels full, 'Blondie' showed them again where to deliver on his map and where he would meet them later. He got back into the truck and the two men started on either side of the street to deliver their bills. The truck sped to the next stop where the kid and the wino got out. Next it was the turn of Leo and the other of the 'buddies.' While 'Blondie' showed them where on the map to go and where they would meet the truck for the next load, he smiled at Leo as if he and Leo had some kind of secret. He said Leo would get 'the hang of it' in no time. Since Leo hadn't said a word, he thought it strange for 'Blondie' to say that, but he smiled anyway and said he'd do his best. 'This'll be a piece of cake,' Leo thought, as the truck drove away.

It was easy, just as Leo thought it would be. He was soon way ahead of his partner on the other side of the street. He'd always prided himself on keeping in good shape and couldn't help congratulating himself on having the stamina when he needed it. It was still early in the day though and nice and cool. That made it easier to keep a quick pace. Most of the houses had fences and verandas which meant you couldn't walk on the lawns and had to climb stairs but Leo was still able to make good speed visiting every house and attaching the circulars to the door of each. He was bored though.

When Leo arrived at the place where he was supposed to meet the truck, his partner was nowhere in sight. In fact, Leo thought that he himself must be in the wrong place because it took a long time for 'Blondie' to arrive with the truck. When Leo finally saw it he had to wave to keep 'Blondie' from driving right by without stopping. Leo's partner still hadn't shown up. 'Blondie' got out of the truck and smiled. "Boy, you did a lot better than I expected you to." He seemed incredulous. "Yeah", Leo said modestly, "One on every doorstep." 'Blondie' looked him over and said "Here's your next batch. Keep up the good work." "Right", Leo said. "Hey, where's the other guy that was with me?" "Oh, I had to fire him. He was throwing them into a garbage can around the corner. Didn't you see him?" 'Blondie' watched Leo's eyes. "No." 'Blondie' grinned. "Well, take good care of these," he said, slamming the door of the truck. "Right", Leo said. "That's odd," he thought.

It was getting warmer now and Leo was beginning to sweat. He decided to change his approach to deliveries. He started to leave the satchel on the sidewalk at each house, carrying only two leaflets up to each door and then retrieving the bag on his way to the next house. That way he was able to keep his pace steady as the sun rose and the day got hotter. Again he reached the meeting place in time to rest for fifteen minutes before the truck showed up. 'Blondie' was even more surprised this time and Leo began to wonder what was on the trucker's mind. 'Blondie' said something about taking it easy, that there were plenty of leaflets. Leo thought maybe he had over done his efficiency. He laughed and said he was getting a little tired. At that 'Blondie's' face cheered up. He told Leo to keep moving steadily and not to worry about it. Leo thought he'd better be careful with 'Blondie.' He slowed down but still reached the next meeting place ahead of the truck.

'Blondie' wasn't happy when he finally came along to reload Leo. Leo smiled but 'Blondie' didn't say anything, just unloaded another couple of stacks of handbills. He was closing the back of the truck when he stopped and opened it again. "Wait a minute! We're nearly at the end of this section. I'll give you some more to take you over into the next spot." He got out his map to show Leo where he was supposed to go and indicated a couple of streets whose names Leo couldn't read. "What are they?" Leo said, craning his head over 'Blondie's' shoulder. "York and Maple", 'Blondie' said, closing the map. "Just follow along and you'll find them," he said, as he jammed an extra stack of leaflets into Leo's bag.



It was hot and the bag dug into Leo's neck. Using the system he had worked out Leo was still able to keep a steady pace, but it was slower now than it was earlier. "That ought to hold you for a while," 'Blondie' had said as he got back into the truck and slammed the door. Leo agreed.

When Leo reached the end of the street, he came to a knot of streets that led off in a number of

directions. He knew that he had to skip a street somewhere before he ran into York St. He looked around but couldn't decide which way to go. Picturing the map in his mind didn't do any good. He couldn't remember which direction it had been facing and couldn't get his bearings now. He wandered into a couple of side streets and finally found one end of Maple St. but he couldn't find York. He decided to deliver Maple hoping it would lead him to York. It didn't. Leo couldn't find York and didn't know where he was supposed to meet the truck. Leo sat down to wait for 'Blondie' by the side of the road.



By Leo's watch it was 12:45. He didn't think it would take 'Blondie' very long to find him because he didn't have very many handbills left in his bag. Logically, that meant that York St., which he couldn't find, wasn't very long. If 'Blondie' checked York St., he could only assume that Leo had finished it and gone on to Maple. Leo wasn't sure where he was supposed to be on Maple but he assumed that 'Blondie' would look around for him. After half an hour, Leo started to walk around on Maple looking up and down at intersections for signs of the truck. It was a red panel truck and every small business in the area seemed to own one. Leo finally went back to the place where he had finished delivering and sat down. It was better to wait in one spot he told himself. The truck couldn't have that many handbills left to deliver. It wouldn't matter anyway, Leo thought, if he missed a couple of turns. He remembered the hasty way that 'Blondie' had shown him where he was supposed to go. 'I should have made sure of that,' Leo thought. He swore at himself, but quickly put the mistake out of his mind, thinking that 'Blondie' would find him sooner or later.

At three o'clock Leo decided to call downtown to the shed where he'd been hired that morning. He still had the newspaper ad with the telephone number in his pocket. He decided to be careful what he said, because he wanted to be paid for the two and a half hours in which he'd been waiting for 'Blondie.' They owed him for his time as far as he was concerned. He'd spent the last two hours loafing, he thought angrily, just because a dumb trucker wasn't doing his job properly.

Leo explained what happened to the voice at the other end of the line. The man didn't seem to just ask how long it had been since Leo saw the truck. It seemed strange to Leo that the man wasn't as bothered about what had happened as he was. Leo lied and told the man he'd last seen the truck an hour ago. He didn't say what time because he wanted that to be as vague as possible. Leo figured that 'Blondie' might be wasting time in the truck somewhere so he didn't want to pin him to any specific places or events at specific times. If Leo was vague about it then 'Blondie' could fit the story he wanted to tell with the one Leo had told. The guy on the phone laughed when Leo said 'an hour'. He told Leo that he'd better come in. The man asked if Leo still had his satchel. Leo said yes. The man said to bring that with him.

It took Leo forty-five minutes to make it back to the shed. As he sat on the streetcars he thought about what he should do when he got there. He knew it was his fault for getting mixed up about directions. Even if 'Blondie' was trying to screw him it didn't make any difference. It was still Leo's fault. He could remember the hasty way that 'Blondie' had shown him where to go on the map. He knew then that he should have got it over again. But somehow he was too tired or didn't want to bother 'Blondie' or just figured it would turn out all right. He couldn't think why, exactly, he'd let that go. 'Blondie' told him to 'Just follow along.' That was the moment. That was the moment when Leo should have had 'Blondie' tell him everything over again. Was 'Blondie' trying to screw him? Leo couldn't decide. He seemed such a dope. Leo knew 'Blondie' didn't give a damn about what he was doing. He drove out with new men every day. He didn't care if one of them got lost once in a while. That might happen but Leo couldn't believe a plot. 'Blondie' just didn't care and he was dumb, too dumb.

Back at the shed there weren't any trucks around, only a couple of parked cars. Leo went inside and explained who he was to a girl behind a counter. She didn't seem to know what Leo wanted so he asked to see the man in charge of payroll. The girl called into a back room and a slim, good looking black man in a checkered shirt came out. He asked Leo what he wanted. Leo explained again who he was and what had happened and the man told him he'd have to wait until the trucks got back. Leo was incensed. He'd already been waiting around for more than two hours. "When will the trucks be back?" The black man looked at him. "I don't know. Whenever they finish delivering." The black shuffled among some papers on the girl's desk and said something to her, his white teeth flashing a smile. "What time are they usually back?" Leo said, using his reasonable voice. "They usually get in around four or four-thirty. It won't be too long," the man said, looking up at him curiously. He took some papers back into the other room.



Leo looked at his watch. It was ten to four. He went outside and sat down on the steps in front of the shed. More waiting. He told himself that he was going to make damn sure that he was paid for the full day's work. He needed that money. His time was important to him. He couldn't afford to waste it just because some dumb truck-driver was too lazy to do his job properly. 'Blondie' should have come looking for him, even if he was lost. Leo wondered if he should go back and ask the black guy about that.... He remembered that moment when he should have spoken to 'Blondie'.... Was he afraid of the black guy?.... 'No. That's ridiculous....' He wanted to know what the policy was on payment of people like him. But then Leo thought, 'No, I'll find out soon enough anyway.... Still,' he thought, 'if I knew in advance I'd be able to confront 'Blondie' and make sure they know I'm not to blame for getting lost.' Leo decided

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