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Irwin Orlov

FEATURE PAGE

HORATIO

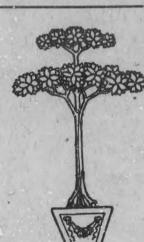
JACKIE WEBSTER

He sat in a corner of the Bus Depot and waited. The Bus was late and the seats were hard and now and then he sighed. But on the whole he was patient. Horato was an Artsman and three years of sharing the campus with the Foresters and Engineers had taught him patience. It was asleep. He opened his pale blue eyes very wide and let his glasses slip down just a bit on his nose where they pinched. It worked. He kept awake. Time passed and the bus came.

weeks away. Horatio sighed.

engers. There were a few men, a few women, the inevitable crying baby, and across from him, another student with a crew and a pipe and beside him a very attractive girl. The girl was reading and Horatio had ample opportunity to observe her charms unnoticed. This he did and was pleased with what he saw. Her hair was long and black -Horatio preferred to call it "raven". She wore no make up except lipstick, and her eyes, when occasionally she glanced from her book, were dark and haunting. Perhaps she was not beautiful, but to Horatio who had had little experience either first or second hand with girls, she spelled glamour.

Horatio settled back in his seat and thought about her . She had an air jof mystry. he decided. Perhaps she had some hidden vice which accounted for her haunting eyes. To Heratio who had no vices at all, this everyone on the bus.



ROCKSLIDE

Under the blinding blue-white sky He came quietly, searching The cracks of each cliff Round a deathless valley For star-like flowers His purpose was strong And his lean hand swere steady When he reached out to gether The star-fatal flowers. But a rock gave way-His cleated boot faltered an instant And clung to the slivering cliff, Then dropped Down the slope Towards the enarling white snow Of the rock-tortured stream Where the flowers were crushed by his fall.

Mergret H. Cunningham

Queens May Object We Don't

If you think some of the poetry in the Journal and the Commentator is out of this world you've never seen a rag from UNB called Fiddlehead, or the UBC's Thunderbird (known also as the fuddlehead and the Dusder bird). A fiddlehead in case you don't know is a young fern frond which goes very well in salads, or even fried, and is one Maritime delicacy (like cod's tongue) which is little known in these parts. The thunderbird is a beast with a very ugly mug which usually rates as top man on West Coast totem poles, but nobody thought of eating one as far as I know. Both of these rags print reams of poetry, which has to be read to be believed. Pipe this (frem the Fiddlehead):

"The bird jumped at bubbles

That's it. All of it. They ain't no more. How does that get writtin? Does the poet (ess) write a bit and then whittle it down to size, or does the editor. edit and edit until there is only a stub left? Or maybe he says, "This poem stinks, but get that bit about the birds anr the rainbow; that's worth printing". Thats how the journalope rates anyway.

Poettic Pills-Queens Journal.

And bit a rainbow."

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warm in the Depot and he was drowsy, but he did not fall

It thundered to a halt amidst a swirl of dust and an eager crowd rushed from the Depot and the battle was on. Heratio did well. He kept his glasses on his nose, his jelly beans in his hand and captured a seat. Mission accomplished, he relaxed; the driver relaxed, closed the door and started the engine. But before he managed to pull away from the curb, the ticket agent came running from the office and agent and driver held a conference outside the bus. Then the driver re-entered and enquired if Miss Sylvia Throckmorton Henderson was a passenger. There was no reply. Apparently Miss Sylvia travelled by train. The agent seemed satisfied, and the driver started the engine again, and they were on their way - back to Fredericton, with the Foggy City far behind and exams just thirteen

After a time Haratio took stick of his fellow pass-

made her infinitely more desirable. Perhaps she was a Spy - a Soviet Spy forced to betray her country against her wishes. Or perhaps she was the girl the police were looking for in connection with an International Dope Ring. Horatio had read about it, and Raven Hair might be the one. If so, perhaps it was his duty to hand her over to the RCMP (or better still the City police) when they arrived in Fredericton. Chills ran up Horatio's spine at the thought of those dark eyes fixed on him reproachfully. Horatio sighed again and suddenly became aware of a strange quiet about him, above the noise of the bus. Then he realized to his horror that he had been daydreaming aloud. He slunk down into his seat with but one comforting thought —thank heaven he was an Artsman. Had he been a Forester, his embarrassment might have been shared by

He sat huddled in the corner of his seat to avoid the stares of his fellow passengers and gradually settled back to normal. And at that point Raven Hair upset the apple cart by moving into the seat beside him. Horatio was so moved with embarrassment that he chose to ignore her. He clutched his jelly beans and stared out the window. Then Rayen Hair spoke. Her voice was beautiful. "You and I", she said, "are getting iff at the next stop".

Horatio continued to ignore her and kept his eyes fixed on the heart of the Geary woods. He found ho joy at the prospect of being alone, even with Raven Hair, in the heart of the Geary woods. And obviously she was pulling his leg, taunting him about his day dreaming. But something else became obvious, however, when she jabbed him none too gently in the ribs with an unmistakable object. He changed his mind about the Geary woods quickly and pulled the cord. Raven Hair smiled at him chummily and followed him from the bus out onto the gravelled road. The bus disappeared around a bend and Horatio's heart sank as he realized he had left his jelly beans behind him on the seat. But he had little time to worry about that with Raven Hair smiling at him hauntingly and lightly holding an automatic in her beautifully manicured hands.

Neither spoke, but to Horatio's credit, he tried. He kept trying with no success and then out of nowhere. it

seemed a shiny canary convertible pulled up in front of them. (It's always black, but we are different). There were three men in the car and Raven Hair seemed to know them; she spoke to them in low tones, watching Horatio lest he should try to escape, and then she and one of the men directed him to the back seat. Occasionally she smiled at him happily as they drove down a long winding road and stopped at last before a small tumble down dwelling. The one thing that took Horatio's attention at once was that the student with the crew cut, a Forester Horatio had discovered, was no longer on the bus, but here leaning against the house and puffing nonchalantly on his pipe. You will remember there was no motion of him leaving the bus and

But Horatio had little time to ponder the mystery. From the conversation it became apparent that he was not long for this world. Raven Hair and her friends were mak-

how he arrived at the scene is a mystery.

"Now that we have hin here, what do we do, Sylvia?" one of them asked.

Sylvia! Of course. Raven Hair must be Miss Sylvia Throckmorton Henderson and Horatio fervently wished that the ticket agent and the bus driver had not been so casual in their toquiries for Miss Sylva. If only they had persisted-then they might have been here in the Geary woods in-

But Sylvia was speaking. "Had to bring him here," she said. "He is wise and was blowing his top on the bus."

They exchanged glances and nodded and Horatio through the many people who considered him dumb. He felt a momentary thrill of pleasure; whatever else she thought, Raven Hair certainly did not think he was dumb.

Then Crew Cut spoke. "That means we will have to rub him out. Who is going to do it?"

Sylvia nodded carellssly towards one of the men. "Ped-

ro can do it", she said. But Crew Cut protested, "Pedro had the last one. Why not give me a chance?"

Raven Hair laughed her silvery laugh and passed him the automatic. "Okay, but hurry. Someone on the bus may take Our Hero seriously and we want to move on with no delay". She smiled across at Horatio and the smile just touched the corners of her haunting eyes.

Now Horatio was not by nature a courageous man. Nor was he a ceward. He was just one of those innumerable people who never have a chance to find out really, what secret wells of courage they may possess. But Horatio was lucky; he had a chance to find out. And from all indications the secret wells were scarce. but the fact that his murderer was to be a Forester put iron in his soul. He straightened his shoulders, drew himself up and grinned across at Crew Cut.

"Okay Bud," he said, "let's get going and get this thing over with". He swaggered a bit and spat on the ground. He grinned at Raven Hair and at the others, "I guess this is the end of the line," he said.

And then another voice broke in. "You said it, Brother, twenty minutes stop and then on to Edmundston. Mark your places before you leave the bus."

Heratio rubbed his eyes and eyed the passangirs sheeply. He Stood up and to test his knees for strength and sat down quickly as the dark girl across from him moved out of her seat. Then he gatherd his books and his jelly beans and started for the Regent. He was in need o fa good strong coke. He sat up at the Bar slowly sipping it when he noticed a man at the end of the Bar pull out a roll of bills much to large to be true, he left his cokt unfinished and moved over to investigate when he remembered Sylvia Throckmorton Henderson and he decided to go home and shave.