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SUMMER 1956

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quarterly**

VOLUME 9

NUMBER 4

# Carroll Quarterly

SUMMER ★ 1956

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# A Story

by John P. Browne

ONCE upon a time, many years ago, so many that neither you nor I could ever count them, and long before the world became what it is today, there was a little country known to men of those times as the Kingdom of Em.

To the north of Em lay the great, vast Autocracy of Ogdo, which was ruled by the good but stern and uncompromising Agd the Autocrat. To the south of Em lay the two small Kingdoms of Esh and Imh; and to the south of those two little principalities, there sprawled the great collosus called the Democratic Republic of Elvi, ruled by the sinister Dictator Delvi. To the east and west of Em there lay many other small Kingdoms and Duchies, some of which were satellites of Elvi, as were Esh and Imh, and some of which were allies of Ogdo.

Now, Em had always tried to be friends with everybody, but the time had at last arrived when it was forced to choose its friends and make its enemies, for it was the last of all the countries in that part of the world which had not sided either with Ogdo or Elvi. The choice was by no means an easy one, as we shall see.

Geo the First was the King of Em. He was young, just 24, and, some might say, handsome. His features were somewhat austere, with sharp, bright eyes; tight, thin lips, and a well-shaped Roman nose. At the moment, his usually serene brow was made a trenched battlefield by a heavy frown occasioned by the expected visit of his Minister for Foreign Affairs. It was never easy to be a King, especially a young King. One could make so very many mistakes! And now the Foreign Minister was coming to reprimand him for something or other; probably the proposed trade alliance with Esh. The troubled Geo gave a start as the great double doors swung open, and the Major-domo chanted:

"His Lordship, the Earl of Cieneccons, Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Kingdom of Em."

The Earl was a dry, sad little man, who was rarely attired in anything other than black. All men agreed that he was a diplomatic genius, and that it was he who was responsible for the present prosperity and well-being of Em. If this were so, he gave no signs of his greatness as he slowly limped into the room, bowed, and spoke:

"Good afternoon, Your Majesty, I sincerely hope that I find you well."

"You find me as usual, Cieneccons, apprehensive about your visits."



"That is most unfortunate and most unnecessary, Sire. Do forgive an old man for his ways."

"Hmmm. Sit down, M'Lord, sit down. I suppose you've come about the Esh affair?"

The old man sighed. "Yes, Sire, I have. I do wish you would consult me before proposing such schemes to the Privy Council. It would save me a great deal of embarrassment. I would be most happy, Sire, if you would be gracious enough to confer with me now on this plan. What is it precisely that you had in mind?"

"As you well know, Cieneccons, there are certain things that my people lack. Oh, it's true enough that they are not essential, but my people clamor for them. They are the little things, the luxury items, the little pleasures that so nicely round out life, and make it pleasant. Indeed, everyone else has them, and enjoys them, and I feel it a great crime to keep my people from them: from the same happiness, contentment, and yes, the feeling of completeness and fulfillment that all others have.

"Now, these little incidentals can be obtained from a great number of places; from many of the Ogdonian Allies, and from many of the Elvian — ah — 'Satellites' as you call them. I feel it would be a disservice to attempt to obtain them from the Ogdonian Allies for there are so many agreements, and laws, and rules, and what-not that would bind Em in their use. Oh, I grant you that these may be all for the good, and I am not completely convinced on that point, but they are all so complicated and exacting that I would prefer to avoid them.

"However, we can obtain these same commodities from the Elvian Satellites without any strings attached; without all that restrictive frippery. Thus, I have determined to deal with the Elvians, and since Esh is the closest producer of these items, it is, I think, the wisest course to deal with her. All that Esh demands is that we agree to a reciprocal trade agreement, and that we sign a non-aggression pact with her and with the Democratic Republic of Elvi. I fail to see any difficulty or unreasonableness here, and, therefore, I have decided to negotiate the necessary and proper agreements with Esh."

"Sire," replied the Foreign Minister, "I do not hope to convince you that the Ogdonian limitations and restrictions are for the good; it is unnecessary, for whether or not there were such limitations, it would still be folly of the highest sort to trade, or, for that matter, have anything else to do with Esh or Elvi. What would be the natural consequences of such an action? Why, we would automatically incur the animosity of the Autocracy of Ogdo; we would be forced into an alliance with Esh and Elvi against Ogdo. Permit me, Sire, to illustrate my point.

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Less than five short years ago, the Kingdom of Imh was in much the same position as we are now. Where is Imh today? Your Majesty well knows that Imh is no longer a sovereign nation. Ensnared by the temptation of possessing Esh's trade, it fell prey to Elvi. It signed the necessary non-aggression pact, and all the rest, and it was abandoned by Ogdo. What then? Without Ogdo's aid, it was a ripe plum to be plucked by Dictator Delvi. In short, Imh suffered an internal revolution sponsored by an Elvian fifth column. It is now a tool of Elvi. Sire, the same shall happen to us."

"Nonsense, Cieneccons. Lord Sualpree was here yesterday and convinced me that that whole story was nothing more than a fabrication. The people of Imh rose up in what he termed a "popular revolution" because my brother monarch was oppressing them. They wanted land reforms; he opposed them. Why, they were nothing more than agrarian reformers who were forced to resort to arms to achieve their demands. There is no oppression here, Cieneccons, nor will there be. Therefore, there will be no revolution."

"Lord Sualpree, Sire? The leader of the Nuf Party — His Majesty's Loyal Opposition? Ah, yes indeed, my old antagonist would beat me to your ear. Undoubtedly, Sire, the Minister for Internal Security has informed you of the activities of Lord Sualpree; undoubtedly he has told you that he and his Nufites are working hand in glove with Elvian agents for Elvian control of Em?"

"Absurd, Cieneccons, absurd! Why, Lord Sualpree is one of the oldest peers in the realm; my father consulted with him often, and occasionally took his advice. As for your Minister for Internal Security — Lord Lecttelin is young, and trying to make a name for himself. Further, he is high in the circles of the rival Carge Party, and you cannot deny that they advocate an alliance with Ogdo. No, his whole report — I merely glanced through it, mind you — lacks credibility; it smacks of red herring."

"Sire, Sire, the great difference between the two parties is that the Cargists work in the open, and the Nufites in secret conspiracy with the baser elements of the population. It is the Nufites who are spreading the demands for co-existence with Elvi and trade with Esh, not the people as a whole."

"You are a reactionary, Cieneccons. Times have changed since you were a young man. You are too conservative now. We have a new manner of living today; we have thrown off the shackles of the ancient past and its superstitions. We now have new morals, new modes of doing things. Modern civilization has passed you by. You still adhere to Ogd's Codex Juris; it is outmoded, old-fashioned — it no longer applies to to-

day's civilization."

"Those are Lord Sualpree's words, Sire, not yours. I know very well you don't put much faith in them."

"But they do sound plausible, M'Lord. I am almost convinced that Lord Sualpree is right and that we are wrong."

"When your head is as gray as mine, Your Majesty, you will know that the old morals, the old ways of doing things are often the best, for they have suffered the test of time."

"I see there is no use disputing the matter with you, Cieneccons; your platitudes have too much wisdom in them to be easily refuted. Well, what would you have me do, then?"

"Lord Lecttelin, I and other Cargist leaders have consulted on this matter. We have agreed that the people of Em deserve to have a — shall we say standard of please? — equal to that enjoyed by their neighbors. We have determined three possible means of obtaining this standard. The first was almost identical with your own, and we immediately rejected it because of its awful consequences. The second is an immediate and open alliance with Ogdo, and consequent upon it, the desirable trade with what will then be our fellow allies. This we recommend as the safest and wisest course. The third way is one which was much favored by your father. After the fall of Esh, he realized that he could never have normal relations with her, yet, he wanted what she had to offer very much, and now you want the same thing. You will recall, Sire, that before she was possessed by Elvi, Esh had petitioned for annexation. We could now annex Esh in this manner: The Queen, who now rules in Esh, is, we now know, nothing more than a figurehead. We also know that she is not connected in any way with the machinations of Dictator Delvi, and that she wants to rid her country of him and his minions so that the once-proud Esh can become self-respecting again. She is young, Sire, and beautiful; the most beautiful woman in all the Kingdoms. You, too, Sire, are young, and unmarried. Remember, Sire, that your Kingly line would take precedence over hers. You could marry her and unite the two kingdoms as one, thus freeing her people, and obtaining for your own people that which the Nufites are convincing them they need so badly. This is a somewhat dangerous course, and may not appeal to you, so we merely suggest it, but do not urge it."

"Hmmm," said the King, as he pressed a button on his desk. "I'm sending for the Elvian Ambassador and General Rayerp. We'll soon see how sound your plans are. Do you have any objections?"

"None, Sire."

"Good."

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The great double doors swung open once more, and the Major-domo entered.

"Send for the Elvian Ambassador at once," said the King, "and General Rayerp. Have the General wait in the South Antechamber until we are finished consulting with the Ambassador, then send him in immediately. Oh, yes, bring us something to eat — you will join me, Cieneccons? Excellent! Some of that cold pheasant will do nicely, and some red wine; you know the proper vintage. That's all."

The Major-domo bowed, and left.

Presently, the food and wine were brought in, and they set to with relish. They bantered small talk like old friends, which they were. Cieneccons ventured to mention that the King should begin to think of marriage. His Majesty, somewhat embarrassed, declared, laughingly, that that was an affair of state, and the subject was dropped.

In due time, the dishes were removed. The King stoked a shiny new briar, and Cieneccons reciprocated with his smelly, old full-bent. The two smoked pleasantly for approximately fifteen minutes, then the Major-domo announced the Elvian Ambassador.

"Your Majesty," said the Ambassador, bowing low, "M'Lord Cieneccons. You honor me, Sire, by your summons. I trust I can be of service."

"You can, you can," said the King, waving him to a plush leather chair. When the Ambassador was seated, the King began: "What would your government think of an alliance between Em and Ogdo?"

"You pain me, Sire," replied the Ambassador. "My government would, nay, could not consider it as anything other than an unfriendly act. I hesitate to mention the consequences of such a movement. I beg of you, for the sake of the happy relations which have always existed between our two countries, not to even consider it."

"Hmmm," said the King, and he went on: "What would your government say to Emian annexation of Esh?"

"Oh, sire, such a course is impossible! Esh is bound to Elvi by treaties most sacred. Elvi could never permit such a move, nor do the people of Esh want such a thing. If I may be so bold, Sire, such a move would be far from beneficial to Em."

"Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador. If you can again be of service, I shall request you attend me."

The Elvian Ambassador rose, bowed and left. The King looked at Cieneccons, and then re-lit his pipe.

The Major-domo announced General Rayerp. The General was a tall man, of stocky build. He was a hail-fellow-well-met-let's-drink-to-that type of personality, with a genial, open countenance, brown, curly



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hair, and bright blue eyes, somewhat myopic and requiring glasses. As he strode into the room, his medals clanking on his breast, he brought with him a faint odor of mothballs. The General did not often have occasion to wear his dress uniform. The formalities completed, he sat down.

"General," said the King, "without any qualification, what is the present state of the army?"

The General squirmed in his seat, and as he did so, a mothball popped from somewhere about his person, and plopped onto the rug at his feet. He made ludicrous efforts to kick it under the chair without being observed, but he failed. Both the King and Cinecons smiled. Finally, he spoke:

"Your Majesty, at present, our weapons are excelled by none, but the soldiers themselves are poor. Their training in the use of those weapons is haphazard and irregular, discipline is practically non-existent, and their diet is meager and of poor quality. To be very blunt, Your Majesty, we could not long resist any sustained drive by any potential enemy."

"What is the current status of the Elvian troops?"

"Probably the finest on the continent, Your Majesty, with but one exception. They are in excellent condition, with a defeat-less tradition. They are matchless troops, well disciplined, high morale, sense of having a mission, loyal to the death. I wouldn't care to quarrel with them, Your Majesty."

"You see, Cinecons," said the King.

"Not quite, Sire. What of the Ogdonian Legans,<sup>1</sup> General?"

"Ah, they are indeed invincible. Not even the Elvians could stand against them."

"Quite true, General, and if memory serves me correctly, they did defeat the Elvians years ago in the First Great War, did they not?"

"I believe you're right, M'Lord Cinecons. I do seem to recall such a thing. But it's been so long ago that hardly anyone remembers it. Yes, now that you mention it, I do recall my old grandfather telling me tales about the First Great War. Yes, the Elvians were beaten, all right."

"Very well, General, that's all," said the King, somewhat in a huff for having his maneuver countered by the faultless memory of Cinecons.

The General bowed and left, but the odor of mothballs lingered.

"Now then, M'Lord Cinecons; it's plain that Dictator Delvi

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<sup>1</sup> This word is *not* meant to read Legions. It is to be spelled as in the text.

## A STORY

means total, all-out war if we follow either of your two courses. What do you say now?"

"Sire, war is on the horizon. The two forces are gathering. It will be Ogd the Autocrat versus Dictator Delvi. We are in the middle. Both sides will tramp over our fields in any case. We must choose sides; we can no longer remain neutral, and it's best to be on the winning side. This proposed trade deal will put us in the Elvian camp. That's the losing side, as I see it. I insist on joining the Ogdonians, you know the reputation of the Ogdonian Legans. Besides, Ogd will never permit us to aline with Delvi."

"I am not convinced that Ogd will strike. He didn't strike at Imh or Esh, or any of the others. Further, I don't think that the war is as close as you imagine. In any case, war is a costly thing. It causes untold hardship, and suffering; agony, pain and sacrifice. If we join with Ogd and the Ogdonians, it is certain war, but there is no such clear danger if we sign that non-aggression pact with Dictator Delvi. As for internal revolt, aren't you and I competent to handle and prevent such a thing? No, Cieneccons, I cannot follow your plan."

"Sire, consider! We are the last to remain wholly independent. Our time has now come. Once we join either side, the war begins. This trade deal, or, I should say, the machinations of the Nufites, has forced our hand in this issue. It will put us in one camp or the other. However, for sake of argument, let us say that the war will not break out for a number of years yet. What will happen to us in that case? Think of all the aid we are currently receiving from Ogdo. We could hardly remain solvent without it. If you join in trade with Esh, that aid will cease, and we will be ripe for internal revolt without it. Whether there is war or no, trade with Esh will be our downfall."

"Cieneccons, are we beggars? Are we children? Are we not a sovereign nation? Must we rely on others always for what we need? No, Cieneccons; we have self-respect. We want trade, not aid. Elvi offers such trade; Esh offers such trade; Ogdo will aid, but not trade. Ogd refuses to compromise, and compromise is the very heart of trade. No self-respecting nation wants charity. It is true that Elvi or Esh cannot supply us with all the things we now receive from Ogdo, but that is a compromise we must make; that is trade. Our immediate wants can be supplied by Esh, and the only wise and honorable — above all, honorable — course left to us is to trade with Esh. It is true that we may make enemies with Ogd, but he is all threat and bluster; he will never take any action. Therefore, I say trade with Esh."

"Sire, we will not last a week without the aid supplied by Ogdo."

"I don't believe it. You are afraid to put our own resources to the

test. They have never been tried; we do not know what we can and cannot do. Let us remain cowards no longer; let us go out and try our strength in the open market."

"Such a course means slavery, Sire."

"Cieneccons, you are an old woman!"

"Very well, Sire, here is my last argument." The Earl of Cieneccons handed the King two folders which he took from his battered black briefcase. "Be so good," he said, "as to examine this portfolio, and this dossier. The first, Sire, is an accurate history of the fall of Imh; I know, because I gathered the data myself. The second is an hour-by-hour report on the activities of Lord Sualpree and the Nufite Party. It is more extensive, comprehensive, and complete than the one given you by Lord Lecttelin. I beg of you, Sire, to examine closely the similarity between the activities of our own Nufite Party, and the activities of the Ins Party of Imh before the fall of that unfortunate kingdom. Remember, Sire, Imh, too, made a trade agreement with Esh on the urgings of its own Ins Party. You know the consequences."

The King read several pages of the proffered documents slowly and carefully. At first, concern, and then agitation, possessed his face. At length he spoke:

"Why this can be nothing other than a monstrous fiction!"

"No, Sire, fact! You know my choice, now, what is yours?"

Well, that is the end of the little story. Rather dull, wasn't it? What was the King's choice? Why the same choice as yours, of course; or haven't you solved the little puzzle yet? . . .

## Spring

When winter weather waxes warm  
And honey bees begin to swarm,  
My heart is pityingly torn,  
My soul so very tired, worn.

For I have lived through a dark, drear season  
That has no normal, practical reason.  
To all dreamers and persons such as I  
It is treason that spring should ever die.

— *Louis Geib*

# *The Search of Peter Quince*

*by David R. Mitchell*

PETER QUINCE had led a quiet, lonely bachelor's existence for some forty years. Perhaps lonely should not be used in describing him, for he was lonely by nature and desire, and such a life readily suited him. The last ten years had been spent in residence at the home of Mrs. Patrick Murphy — room and board at reasonable rates for ladies and gentlemen. While Mrs. Murphy saw to the management of her boarding house, Mr. Murphy dabbled in politics — usually at the corner tavern. Because of his continued residence at the Murphys, Mr. Quince, by facility of being the first there when others vacated the premises, gradually worked his way into the best room in the house, and after four years occupancy was securely entrenched therein.

A decade of living with the Murphys had made Mr. Quince almost a member of the family, and so it came to be that at the absence of Mr. Murphy at the dinner table (which was frequent) Mr. Quince would be installed at the head of the table by the mistress of the house and from this position would benignly see that all of Mrs. Murphy's twenty or more boarders would receive their fair portion of the day's repast. On such occasions Mr. Quince would shrug off the shuffling, mincing manner which marked him on the street and at work, and would almost become hearty in his role. Indeed Mr. Quince's employers would have found it difficult to identify their "office fixture clerk" with this genial head of the table.

Mrs. Murphy's guests (guest did not sound cold and distant, Mrs. Murphy felt) were a bit awed by Mr. Quince. His part at the table did not affect them in the least, it was later, after dinner, in the parlor that Mr. Quince made his impression upon the inhabitants of Mrs. Murphy's boarding house. Having been alone most of his life, Mr. Quince had turned to reading and nothing so delighted him as books dealing with the occult.

The fact is that Mr. Quince considered himself quite the spiritualist. At first he had been content to merely attend seances, but after a particularly awe-inspiring session with the ouija board one evening in Mrs. Murphy's parlor, he began to feel that he had the soul of a spiritual medium. From that time on at least one evening a week was devoted by Mr. Quince to the pursuit of the deceased relatives of his fellow boarders. The boarders willingly joined in the fun, though to Mr.



Quince it was in dead (?) seriousness.

The weekly seances were being held on Friday night of late and this Friday, immediately after dinner, Mr. Quince made a point of personally asking the new boarder, Mr. Parker, to attend. Parker was lighting a cigar when Mr. Quince approached and cautiously tapped him on the shoulder.

"Ahem, Mr. Parker."

As he turned to look down on Mr. Quince's disordered hair, Parker exhaled a large cloud of smoke. Mr. Quince unfortunately inhaled after his opening statement and swallowed most of the choking smoke.

"Oh, my dear fellow," Parker roared. "I'm so sorry," and he dealt Quince a blow on the back which hurled him headlong into the table on when the dinner dishes were stacked. It was some time before Quince, lying on the floor amidst broken china, could voice, with a return gust of smoke, a weak, "Excuse me."

Later in the parlor, Mr. Quince, once more in control of things, looked about nervously for Parker, and seeing him safely out of touch in the far corner, breathed a sigh of relief and proceeded to instruct the small, white haired lady before him as to her part in the program.

"Now, Mrs. Hern, you just sit in this chair facing me and put your hand on mine."

"Oh, do you really think I can talk to dear Arnold?"

"I'm almost certain of it. Now if we're all ready," and he turned and looked at the nodding heads which encircled him and Mrs. Hern.

Mr. Quince cast one more apprehensive glance at Parker, who was leaning against the wall, an amused twinkle in his eyes behind the curtain of cigar smoke, and signaled for the lights to be extinguished. A giggle or two and the rustle of clothing as people settled themselves disturbed the darkness for a moment and then all was silent.

"Concentrate," Mr. Quince whispered fiercely to Mrs. Hern and then in his best medium's voice he cried softly, "Oh, restless spirits, hear us. Let us have some sign that you are here and wish to contact us."

It must be admitted that even Mr. Quince jumped when a loud tapping broke the silence.

"Who — who are you," quavered Mr. Quince. "Speak."

"Martha," a muted voice called. "Martha."

"Yes — yes Arnold," was all Mrs. Hern could manage to utter.

"Martha," the voice wailed again.

Just then everyone's whispers of amazement were suddenly hushed by the sight of a luminous ball, which appeared seemingly from nowhere, rested for a moment on the floor, and then arose silently to the ceiling where it hovered. The darkness wore the silence of vacuum, but only

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momentarily. With a crash, Mrs. Hern fainted backward, upsetting her chair and the air was filled with shrieks as all tried to leave the room at once.

When the lights went on, Mr. Quince still sat in the midst of the shambles, staring with unseeing eyes at the figure of Mrs. Hern, who gave a spasmodic jerk and then lay silent again.

Only after Mrs. Hern had been carried to the couch and revived with some water did anyone notice that Parker was sitting on the floor in the corner, his face buried in his arms.

"Oh goodness. Poor Mr. Parker," Mrs. Murphy cried and hastened with a glass of water to the man's side. Parker lifted a red, tearful face and with a snort exploded into peals of laughter.

"I'm sorry about Mrs. Hern," he finally managed to choke out, "but I've never had so much fun in my life."

"Look," he chortled and pointed to the ceiling.

The eyes turned upward saw a toy balloon bobbing gently against the chandelier.

"What a little ventriloquism and some luminous paint won't do," and he went off again into tearful laughter.

The boarders were a little upset at first about being duped, but after it had been ascertained that Mrs. Hern was no worse for the wear, their sense of humor got the best of them and they began to laugh. All except Mr. Quince. He slipped away quietly to his room.

Friday nights thereafter were devoted to Parker and the dummy



*"... he noticed a title which intrigued him."*

which he dangled on his knee. Quince would never attend these sessions, but up in his room he could hear happy laughter and animated applause. He took to spending more time at the library and poking about old bookshops.

On one such exploration he had practically exhausted the possibilities of a grimy, little shop, when glancing up at a dusty top shelf he noticed a title which intrigued him. *The Aspects of Metempsychosis* could be had for one dollar, so he took the book home with him.

Dinner was already in progress when Mr. Quince arrived home and as he entered the dining room he was dismayed to see a jovial Parker at the head of the table. He stood in the doorway for a moment until Mrs. Murphy turned and saw him.

"Why it's Mr. Quince."

A startled hush came over the table. Eyes turned to Mr. Quince and then swept back to Parker, who, with carving knife and fork poised over a roast, lost his jovial smile momentarily, only to regain it quickly and boom a hearty, "Hello there, Quince old man."

"You haven't been with us for so long," Mrs. Murphy hemed and hawed, "That I — that is — well I thought . . . Mr. Parker offered," she finished lamely.

"It's perfectly all right," Mr. Quince murmured. "I understand."

He turned and left the room.

Upstairs in his room he was too excited about his find at the bookstore to dwell on his lost honors and he swiftly tore off the book's wrappings. A hasty thumbing showed him that the book did not deal with spiritualism and he was about to throw it away in disgust, when he noticed a chapter titled "The Soul." He leafed back to the beginning and began to read. Metempsychosis, he found, meant reincarnation. Mr. Quince read until daylight and not until then did he climb in bed and fall asleep.

Two months passed before Quince could bring himself to chance dining again with the household. The first night things were a bit strained, but thereafter the atmosphere seemed more natural and gradually he became one of the group again. The boarders were becoming a little tired of Parker's never-ending wise cracks and practical jokes and they were rather glad to receive inoffensive, friendly Mr. Quince back into the fold.

As some of his former popularity returned, Mr. Quince warmed once again to his fellow boarders and even went so far as to tell them that he was no longer interested directly in spiritualism.

"Really Mr. Quince?" asked a disappointed Mrs. Hern. She had never quite caught on to the fact that the seance had been a joke and she

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was sure that "dear Arnold" might try to get in touch with her again.

"I'm afraid so," Mr. Quince replied. "I've changed my views about the hereafter and I'm interested in a far more interesting concept."

Allen, who had the room across from Mr. Quince, asked jokingly, "Whata ya studying now? Ventriloquism?"

After the laughter had died down, Mr. Quince, who had laughed too, replied, "Nothing really." Secretly he hoped they would press him to reveal his new interest.

"Come now, Mr. Quince. I'm sure it's very interesting," Mrs. Murphy begged. She was anxious to please Quince.

Several others coaxed him, so with the air of a man revealing the philosopher's stone itself he said, "Metempsychosis."

Silence reigned.

"What?" Mrs. Murphy demanded at last.

"Reincarnation," Quince explained.

"Oh," Mrs. Murphy said.

Parker could keep quiet no longer. He slammed his fist down on the table, rattling the dishes and startling the others.

"That's the guff about coming back after death as someone else. You going to be a king or president next time around, Quincy boy?"

Mr. Quince flinched at "Quincy," but managed to smile as he replied, "Not exactly."

Quietly he excused himself and left the room. As he climbed the stairs he could hear Parker's loud voice telling the others about "Quincy boy's reincarnation." He had reached the upstairs hall when laughter floated up to him from the dining room.

The darkness of his room offered a sanctuary and he sank on the bed with a sigh. "No," he thought to himself, "he wouldn't be a king next time around. Kings were out of date. He'd thought it over carefully and had studied, and he was sure that next time around, as Parker put it, he would be in a position to make up for the inadequacies of his past life. Money and power would show people like Parker. He, Peter Quince would be the one to laugh loudly then."

. . . . .

Mr. Quince died peacefully in his sleep a few months later. Mrs. Murphy who had discovered the body, cried all morning. She had really been fond of the strange little man. The funeral was on a Saturday and after the interment the mourners, consisting primarily of boarders, came back to the house for luncheon.

A loud, droning noise brought Quince to consciousness. He looked about. There were a great many people standing about the dining room



and he could not distinguish the words their buzzing implied were being spoken.

That's strange. Everyone seemed to be dressed for mourning.

What had happened? Why was there a huge buffet luncheon? Whatever for?

The sound of Mrs. Murphy's voice startled him and he turned toward it.

"That poor little soul," Mrs. Murphy said. "Mr. Quince was such a harmless, nice little man."

Why, she's talking about me. Why?

He laughed aloud, but he heard no sound. He laughed again and looked to see if Mrs. Murphy and Parker, who was talking to her, had noticed.

No. They were still talking. Hadn't they heard him?

What was it they were saying? He moved closer to them.

"Odd fellow, but nice," Parker agreed. "I wonder if he really believed in that nonsense about coming back? Suppose he did. Odd fellow."

He knew then. He had died and this was his wake. He had come back! The fools were mourning him when they should be amazed and awed. This was it!

Mr. Quince tried to attract Parker's attention.

Oh what fun he'd have when Parker saw him. He could picture the shocked look on the man's face. Odd, Parker paid no attention.

He went closer. They'd surely notice him now.

"Mr. Parker," screamed Mrs. Murphy. "There's a cockroach on the table. Oh, quickly, get it."

"I see it," Parker acknowledged, and he brought his first down heavily on the table.

Mr. Quince scuttled away just in time to avoid the descending blow.

# The Early Greene: *The Man Within*

by Robert Hall

**T**HE *MAN WITHIN* is Graham Greene's first published novel. In a note prefacing the reprint of this book in the uniform edition of his works, the author apologizes for the "embarrassing sentimentality and romanticism" of his maiden effort. He asks the reader to excuse the reprint as the gesture of an author toward the "period of ambition and hope" which was his youth. The implication is, of course, that hope, ambition, and youth have all dissolved with nothing of quality to take their place.

This is an attitude the reader has come to expect from Mr. Greene. His later novels, essays, "entertainments," even travel books could hardly be accused of a roaring optimism. Thus, the reader examines this earlier work with a view toward finding a more formative, more basic stage in the author's development, a youthful optimism, perhaps, which later novels would temper. Such is not the case.

To begin, the same grey world of the soul prevails. Andrews, the victim, is caught between body and soul where humanity is. He is a man afraid: of pain, of the lack of sex. He is a man in need: of pure love and, what is the same thing, pain. He is beset by the simple paradoxes which constitute individual existence, upon which individual life is judged. Andrews wants no more of Heraclitus; he wants to die. But Andrews, like Sara, Scobie, or Bendrix, has got to earn his death. He must die knowing that the pain of the struggle to avoid pain is living and that the climax of life is the realization that pain itself is the static element, the price of peace in death. A man without his pain has lost his individualizing note. This pain he shares alone with God. It is the quality without which he cannot love.

What is this pain of Greene's? It would seem to beach man's participation, through each man's sin, in the Crucifixion. Here, in *The Man Within*, in all of Greene's works, are the everyday effects of the individual's complicity in God's pain. Greene has tried in each of his novels to show us a human being confronted with this guilt, this suffering. Some, as in *Brighton Rock*, go as far as Hell to avoid the realization with which life confronts them. Others are constrained to accept their share in the pain; still others accept voluntarily.

The latter are the saints. But the most of us are in the middle

group, the grey people. Andrews is the grey people. He is a precursor of the far more finely drawn Scobie. Andrews is a coward. And aren't we all, really, a bit afraid, lost, sinning because sin is the only painless reality, the only hook in a disjointed world we can grasp without effort? Look at Carlyon, the poetic murdered, or Andrews's father, a man without fear. Their very refusal to admit fear is their ticket to Hell.

As with many of Greene's later characters, Andrews seeks an answer to his fear of death and responsible action in sexual promiscuity. And this is an interesting point. Greene recognizes the fact that, in dealing with human beings, there are only two possible numbers. In a material world, however, the individual's urgent need for an intensely personal congruency is thwarted in the very place which offers the closest possible material approximation of that congruency. It is precisely in the throes of his sexual meanderings that Andrews begins at last to doubt the essential validity of the pronoun *we*. At this point Andrews meets Elizabeth, not his congruency, for that is God, but his instrumental cause.

Andrews believes Elizabeth to be a saint. Is she? Not until the end of the novel, when she sends him on a needless errand, knowing that his enemies are at that moment at her front door. Elizabeth knows that, upon apprehending the danger, Andrews will run, as he always has. But she prays that he will return, be she herself dead or alive; that he will at last direct the fear and the cowardice toward the effect of his own salvation.

Andrews does return, to find she has killed herself in her own fear of Carlyon's henchmen. He accepts the blame for her death and the novel ends as he prepares to commit suicide. Why suicide? The man admits he could have believed (in God), given another week with Elizabeth. But now he at least hopes. God, if He exists, must surely know that he has justified his birth. He has killed fear, his father's image, the man within. He has accepted his share of the pain, albeit vaguely, not quite understanding, but with a sense of fulfillment. Like Scobie, it's really hard to say.

On page 50, Elizabeth says to Andrews, "But you always leave out God." *The Man Within* is, briefly, the story of the internal catharsis necessary for a man to let Him in. Thus, even in his first novel we find Greene preoccupied with the individual's attempt to ignore a highly personal God. Dovetailed with this theme is Greene's circumstantial application of the moral law, an approach described by some moral theologians as "circumstance ethics." Greene would seem, however, to under-

## THE EARLY GREENE

stand quite well the impingement made upon free will by the here and now and it could reasonably be asked whether those who apply such mystical terminology to Mr. Greene condemn him as a realist or as a moralist. There seems to be some confusion on this point, none of it literary. Greene can be just. Like Mauriac, his love of the sinner does not extend to the Pharisee (*cf.* Farne, the villagers, and the judge in the novel under discussion).

In this early work, too, we find the amazing insight, the knowledge of the soul which is the author's chief virtue. In a single sentence he can lay bare the tragedy of a life.

"There was a game which he had played at school, where one boy, *too often himself* . . ." (p. 44)

This fragment (underscoring mine), aside from its hint of a lifetime of confusion, is indicative of another of Mr. Greene's tenets. For him, the joy of youth is a sham. This idea is given greater scope in *Brighton Rock* and the story, "The End of the Party." There is here, then, despite the lean years of the characters, no joy of living, no indication that all concerned are incapable of a "Gerontion."

The only serious criticism of Greene is the death in his landscapes. This might be permissible if he needed it to heighten the mood. But Greene needs an almost photographic realism in his background, if he is to counteract the effect of his character analyses and thereby avoid the impression of negative idealism which he now unquestionably conveys.

The characterization in this early work is spotty when compared with his later work, though Greene can well be proud of an Andrews at 22 years of age. The women are shades, however, and this is particularly disturbing in Elizabeth where we need to know. Greene, unlike many authors (Twain notoriously), was not again to allow a character's sex to stand in the way of a comprehensive delineation.

The secondary characters are well done. Farne, Merriman, Mrs. Butler all display, in their turn, the slight motivating factors which propel their lives.

But it must be admitted, in conclusion, that Mr. Greene is somewhat of a romantic in his own strange way. These people, the unhappy ones, we aren't like, Greene says, at all. We are not sensitive and, like the fox, we blame the trap and die all the same. Greene's characters are often far more sad than we, but they, at least, attempt an internal therapy. Of course, a world of Andrews or Scobies would be yet a pretty murky place, but would be as close to realizing Pope's half jesting comment,

"And now a bubble burst, and now a world?"



# Promise

by Michael Black

THE door to the stuffy little room banged open, and in stalked George Fitzwater. George was somewhere between thirty-five and forty, of ordinary height, a little broad about the middle, but not alarmingly so. He was a redhead, and consequently, an extrovert; and, as all redheaded extroverts should, he sported a bushy red mustache of the style popular with the British air force in the Second World War. In his hand he carried a briefcase.

"Hello, Doc," he said, "I've got a surprise for you."

Doctor Hans Bachman was a tall, heavy man with a thick shock of blond hair who was skirmishing with his late fifties, and beginning to feel old. Before Columbia was blasted to a pile of radioactive rubble he had taught there. Despite his name, he was an expert on all things Celtic. He could read and speak Manx, Erse, Gaelic, Welsh, and Bretonic fluently, and was looked upon as the foremost living scholar and authority on Celtic literature and customs. As the door banged open, he had been sitting, surrounded by malodorous clouds of pipe smoke, contemplating the glowing coals in his full bent briar, the battered veteran of many a late hour of study.

"Hello, George, won't you ever learn to knock?"

"This is no time for formalities, you old stuffed shirt; don't you know we're in the midst of an all-out war? Anyway, I've got a surprise for you."

"No excuse for barging in that way. Got something big, I suppose, to bring you out this time of day. How'd you get here anyway? Radio said tube 5 was caved in."

"It is; direct hit up above. I came by the military tube. Have you been to the surface lately?"

"No, no reason to."

"There's nothing up there but radiation glow from horizon to horizon. It's a ghastly sight, Doc, a ghastly sight. Well, I've got something for you."

"Tobacco, I hope. I've been mixing mine with tea leaves to make it last longer."

"Nope. No such luck."

Digging into his briefcase, he produced a ragged piece of vellum and a sheaf of notes. Giving these to Doctor Bachman, he sat back in a

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battered old easy chair, and proceeded to look like the cat that swallowed the canary.

"What's this, eh! Manuscript . . . in Latin . . . Celtic characters!"

"What century do you place it?"

"Hum, fifth or sixth; no later than the seventh. I'd have to study it quite a bit before I'd say for sure."

"Ableman places it at fourth or fifth. He put it through the tests."

"Well, I'll take his word for it; he knows his business. What'd you bring it here for?"

"Read it and find out — no, on a second thought, I'll tell you. It should throw some light on early Irish Christianity. I found it in a box of manuscripts when they were evacuating the University library. Ableman isn't sure, but he thinks it's originally either from St. Gall or Lindisfarne. But read it."

"I don't feel like struggling with Latin just yet," said Bachman laying aside the vellum and picking up the sheaf of notes. "This translation — yours?"

"No, Ableman's. Mine agrees substantially with his."

"Hum! This Fingal GillPadriag, is he the author or just the scribe?"

"As far as we can tell, he's the author. There's not enough of the manuscript to make identification positive; but comparing the name and the contents, we think he's the author."

"Um-hmmm!" Doctor Bachman read:

. . . And Padriag, Father to the churches of Eire, ascended a very high mountain which lies in the kingdom of Connacht, in the place called Mayo, that is, 'the plain of yew trees'; the land of Maeve of the Golden Throat, of the Snow-white breast; Maeve the crimson-lipped, the Leader of Armies, the Warrior Queen, the Destroyer of Battle-breaking Heroes, the Ravisher of Ulster, and the Doom of Cucullen.

"Hum," said Bachman, "this Fingal lists more titles than *Burke's Peerage*. Quite the old flatterer. I take it he's a Connacht man."

"Probably. Too bad Maeve couldn't have heard him. She'd have made him court bard. But read on."

And after fasting forty days and forty nights, Padriag beseeched the Lord that the tender shoots of Christianity which he had planted might wax strong and tall, and ever-faithful.

Thereupon, in answer to his prayer, the whole world was spread before him. Many strange and unknown lands, and some to the west of Eire were seen; and all were aglow with the light of God's word.

While gazing upon this scene of profound beauty, Holy Padriag perceived that far to the east the light flickered, grew dim, and was at last completely extinguished. Swifter, now, than the darkest night came

an ebon blackness, hell's light, and covered the face of the earth, all complete, save only for Eire. In Eire of the saints, in Eire of the schools and churches, God's light remained, yet did not remain. To the north it dimmed, and grew dimmer. Padriag wept, and cried out in his grief and anguish that it might not be.

The Lord sent an angel to comfort him in his sorrow. Father Padriag sent the angel winging heavenward with prayers and petitions. He seemed to hear again, as if afar off, the Children of Focluit Wood crying, "Padriag, bring us light that we might see."

The angel returned with supplications unheard. Holy Padriag vowed never to leave his bleak mountain nest 'til prayers were answered, or 'til God called him home.

Seven times in all was sent the angel, and seven times returned he. On the seventh, he said, "Padriag, the Lord is weary of your pleas. So be it as you wish; but your beloved Eire must suffer much to keep the Holy light.

"For a week of centuries she shall suffer a tyrant's heel, her churches razed will be, her priests and holy men hunted even as the wolf, with the wolf's price, and her schools will be destroyed; all learning forbidden. But she shall persevere and triumph; she shall spread the light far and near.

"And yet again the darkness shall cover the world, but fear not, Padriag, for the great set shall press Eire to her bosom, and the wild waves shall roll where saints prayed and scholars taught.

"God is not mocked. Seven years after the great sea covers the Holy Isle, the world shall glow again, though not in the fire of love, but in the fire of wrath. God shall destroy the world as He foretold, in flames and desolation, for it would not burn with His love.

Having so said, the an . . .

"Well, that's the end of it."

"What do you think?"

Putting down the sheaf of notes, Doctor Bachman picked up the manuscript, and studied it for a few moments.

"Hum, vellum's nearly perfect, the ink is barely faded, the Latin is legible, the coloring's still vivid, and the fragment's nearly complete; yet, I think it's genuine. Of course, I'd want to put it through a few tests myself before saying for . . ."

"No, no! I mean the text itself. What do you think of it?"

"Oh, the text. Well, I've been looking for some substantiation for that legend. This looks good, but I don't know. Off hand, I'd say it's a combination of Malachi's prophecies and the imagination of some pious monk; but the age of the manuscript — if Ableman is right, and I think he is — would rule that out. I don't know. Can you leave it here for a while? I'd like to look it over more carefully later."

"Sure, keep it as long as you like. Only Ableman knows I have it, and he wants your opinion on it too. Well, it's time I was going . . ."

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"Stay a while . . . here, have some whiskey. Riding those tubes takes a lot out of a man; you could use some new blood."

"Thanks; don't mind if I do. Where'd you get this stuff anyway? I didn't know they had any down here."

Bachman laughed. "They didn't. I found an old Scottish manuscript describing the making of uiscebaugh, so I rigged up a still of my own."

"Damn it, Doc, you're wonderful, and worth your weight in gold to boot. But where'd you get the makings?"

"Shhh, military secret. What you don't know won't hurt you, m'boy. Let's just say that General Stuart likes a drop himself every now and again. Hum! Time for the news broadcast. Care to hear it?"

"Yeah, guess so. You know, I miss television more than anything else down here. Conelrad does all right, though; you've got to give 'em credit for keeping the radio going."





"Quiet, he's coming in."

. . . has been verified. The Russians have dropped a bomb of unprecedented power a few miles off the west coast of Ireland. Authorities believe it to have been a guided missile with a cobalt warhead, the first of its kind to be used in the war to date. Great damage was done; the west coasts of Scotland and England have been lashed by tidal waves thirteen or fourteen feet high, some even as high as twenty-five feet. The Hebrides, the Mull of Kintyre, the westernmost parts of Scotland and Wales, and the Isle of Man have been inundated. There is nothing left of Ireland but a few rocks still showing above the sea. An RAF pilot in the area at the time is quoted as saying, "The Atlantic just seemed to leap up and swallow Ireland; bloody show. The Russian is a poor shot; missed London by miles." It is estimated that over three million people have vanished with Ireland. Since no enemy aircraft were detected in the area, authorities believe it to have been a guided missile that caused the blast. We repeat, the Russians have dropped . . . hold on a minute, a message is coming in from London . . . we'll have the message in a moment . . .

George looked at Doctor Bachman. He slugged down a quarter glass of whiskey and said in a still, quiet voice, "You wanted substantiation."

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## *An Island Morning*

The mist of an island's morning  
 Rising up from the breast of the sea  
 Seeps 'round the mountain, bitter and chill,  
 Seeps o'er the silent and soft-flowing rill,  
 Seeps by the cottage, peaceful and still.  
 Sun all a-glory, newly a-borning,  
 Lilt of a curlew, soft in a tree.

The mist of an island's morning  
 Rising up from the green-bosomed bay,  
 Seeps up the side of the heather-crowned hill,  
 Seeps through the blades of the gaunt-arm'd mill,  
 Seeps through the vale where mountain streams spill.  
 Sun in its glory, newly a-borning,  
 Banished the mist with a gold-warm ray.

— John P. Browne

# Open Season

*by David Ryan*

"**N**OW you kids get out from under foot, and stay out!" Sam Coyle continued cleaning his shotgun, but watched until the last of the three children scrambled through the door and spilled out into the bright autumn sunlight. He smiled and turned to the man next to him, who was occupied with a similar task. "Kids," he said.

The other man chuckled. "They sure are a bother, but can't say as I blame 'em much. I was the same way, all excited like, when my dad went hunting. Seems like there's just something in the air." He chuckled again and squinted as he poked a cleaning rod down the barrel of a worn 30:30.

Sam got up and moved closer to the sun-swept window. With great care he swabbed the few remaining flecks of grease from the gun and then held it up to the light for final inspection. Satisfied, he laid the gun on a table and gathered his cleaning kit together.

"Martha ought to have dinner ready pretty soon. Hope there's dumplings. Just thinking about getting out in the air makes a man hungry," Sam said. He moved to the open door and stood in it with his hands in his hip pockets. The children, two boys and a girl, were playing in a small orchard near the house. Their laughter and shouts floated to him and he smiled again. The glare of the bright sun on the chalk-white henhouse hurt his eyes. He turned away and came back into the room.

The sharp cry of his wife calling the children to dinner interrupted Sam's remark to the other man, who was cleaning up his gear. "Good," Sam exclaimed. "You just leave that stuff be, Al. It can wait 'til after dinner."

Both men went outside and washed at the pump. The children were already seated at the table when Sam and Al entered the kitchen. They waited a moment until Martha sat down before seating themselves. She was up again a second later to bring more food to the table, and as she sat down again she smiled at the two men.

"You men ain't never really happy 'til you get them guns and go chasing some poor thing. I guess you're all nothing but killers at heart. I don't understand why we womenfolk ain't more scared of you. Must be our cooking!"

They all laughed and helped themselves to the meal before them. The children said nothing, in deference to their elders, but their eyes grew big and they listened gravely to Sam and Al tossing hunting tales and wondrous feats back and forth. After dinner the men went into the living room, leaving Sam's wife and the children to clear up after the meal.

"Planning any campaigning for re-election this year, Sam?" Al asked, as he stirred sugar into his coffee.

Sam slowly screwed the top back on the bottle from which he had splashed a little rum into his coffee cup.

"No, I don't reckon I will. I've been sheriff close to five years now and I figure just letting people know I'm running again will be enough."

He settled himself more comfortably in his chair and a grin lit his face for a moment.

"You might say I'm sorta indispensable to the people of this county. Now mind, I ain't bragging, but what other sheriff ever cleaned out these hills the way I done. Nope, don't mind if I say so myself, the taxpayers had ought to be damn glad they voted me in."

Al drained his cup and placed it on the table. "There's no denying that you're doing a good job, Sam, but this business of you killing so many of them escaped convicts and moonshiners has got people wondering. No offense, Sam, but you've brought back eight dead men this year alone."

Sam jumped to his feet. "Why, damn it! If that's all the gratitude them fools have, I'll resign! I'll resign in the morning! I risk my neck and . . ."

"Hold it Sam," Al waved a protesting hand, "I just said people were talking. Don't get all riled up. The solid citizens are back of you. They want an efficient sheriff. It's just that maybe they don't want one that's too efficient."

"What would you do?" Sam cried, as he jabbed a stubby finger into Al's chest. "What would you do if you was alone in them hills," he swept his arm in the direction of the window and the evening darkness outside, "and you was faced with catching a man that wouldn't think twice of shooting his own kin? Would you give 'im first chance at putting a bullet through you?"

Al rose and coughed with embarrassment. "Sam, it's like you say. It's a mean job. People just don't know. Well, I had better head home. Lots to be done before our hunting trip."

Sam studied the face of his friend a moment and then he too rose.

## OPEN SEASON

"Yep it's getting sorta late."

After he had closed the door behind Al, he stood with his back to it and studied his hands in the dim light which reached the vestibule from the living room. His hands were clammy and he could see beads of perspiration on the palms. He slapped them together and rubbed them vigorously. He locked the door and went into the living room.

"Martha," he called, "I'm going to bed now. I'm kinda tired all the sudden." There was no answer, but he knew she had heard. He wondered if she had been listening when he and Al had been talking. Martha was one of those who did not understand. That might be why she had not answered. Martha was funny like that sometimes.

When he had finally warmed the cold sheets with his body, he still could not sleep. He lay looking out at the limb of the cherry tree which rubbed against the window on windy nights.

"People just don't understand," he mused. "It ain't like going after a lost dog or something. It's dangerous work and the man with the advantage has to take it. It's like pitting yourself against a wildcat. He's ready and armed and so are you, and the first one in action stays alive. That's all there's to it."

Sam threw the blanket aside and sat up on the edge of the bed. He groped for a cigarette in the darkness and grunted with satisfaction when he found the last one in a pack. He lit it. He could take his time smoking. His mind wasn't letting him sleep.

"Why, why didn't people see it? Did their full bellies and locked doors make them so confident they could forget?" Last fall he had brought in a stag draped over the hood of his car. He remembered how everyone in town had gathered around, and how their eyes shone with envy and how they praised him for his kill. A dead deer, an animal who had hurt no one. But let him return with the body of a thief, a murderer, and there were cries against him. Sam put out the cigarette and lay back on the bed. He lay there, thinking, for a long time.

Martha's voice startled him into wakefulness. It was still dark, but the night was beginning to grey a little. "Sam," Martha whispered fiercely, still shaking him. "There's someone on the phone. Wake up!"

"All right, I'm awake." Sam stuck out a reluctant foot from beneath the covers and shivered at the bite of the early morning air. The little light above the telephone stand blinded him for a moment as he put the cold receiver to his ear.

"Sheriff," a voice crackled over the wire.

"Yeah," Sam answered sleepily.

"Sheriff, this is Wille Hays over at the county jail. Johnny Kirk — you know, the murderer they extradited from Virginia — well, he broke out tonight. He killed Jack Peterson, the night guard, and took his gun and car. They found the car down near Purple Ridge. It looks like he's gone into the hill country. That's where he was raised, you know. Thought you'd wanna know about it sheriff. Right?"

Sam was fully awake now, already half out of his pajamas. "Thanks Wille. Get what men you can and cover the west ridge, I'll take the south. I think I know where he may be." Sam dressed hurriedly while Martha was brewing coffee downstairs.

He stood by the stove and gulped the scalding liquid. Martha turned as he set the cup down and spoke to him. "Sam, I don't want you to run for sheriff again when your term is up."

Sam stared at his wife and then put his arm around her. "Why honey, I know it's rough being married to a lawman and getting up at all hours, worrying and such, but it's kinda like having a doctor for a husband; I mean it's helping other folks out and all."

Angrily, she spun out of his arms and stood with clenched fists resting on the kitchen table. "It ain't the danger or you being away so much that bothers me, Sam. It's you. You don't act right on your job somehow. Every time there's somebody to be chased and caught you get a kind of gleam in your eye, and you seem too eager. It's almost as though you get a thrill hounding after some poor man as though he was — an animal or something."

"She must of heard me and Al talking," he thought. He turned, wiping his suddenly clammy hands on his hips. He spoke to her calmly, as he would to one of the children.

"Honey, you just don't understand. After a man has broken the law, he ain't human no longer. He's an animal. I'm just trying to protect our friends and neighbors, and besides I've got the law behind me."

"Sam, Sam, I just don't know you anymore!" she cried.

"I'm going after a murderer, Martha. A man what's killed twice now, and won't hesitate to kill again. Poor Jack Peterson is lying dead down at the jail because of him. What about his family? What about anybody that gets in that devil's way?"

"He may be a killer, but he's desperate and he's a human being, a man same as anybody when you get right down to it. Why, Sam? Why this satisfaction in vengeance?"

"Hell, woman! You ain't got no sense!" He was finding it hard to control himself. "For a man what runs against the law it's always open



## OPEN SEASON

season. That's the law Martha! It's my duty!"

He turned from his wife and went into the living room. He opened a closet door and took his heavy jacket off the hook. From the desk he took his badge and pinned it carefully on the front of the jacket.

Sam put the jacket on and unlocked the gun case. He strapped on a revolver and selected a Winchester from the rifle rack. The shotgun shells he had bought for the hunting trip were stacked carefully against the rear of the case. He stood for a moment, looking at the blue and red boxes, before he picked up several boxes of rifle shells and stuffed them into his pockets.

When he was about to lock the case, he noticed his hunting license. He picked up the leather holder it was in and wiped a speck of grease from the celluloid cover. "Might see some game on the way home," he reflected, as he slid the holder into his pocket.

He went straight to the garage without saying good-bye to Martha. She could be seen sitting at the kitchen window as he backed the station wagon out, and he almost honked the horn to draw her attention.

"No, don't have the time," and he gunned the engine, spinning the tires and sending up a shower of gravel. He drove for several miles on the main highway and then turned off on a narrow side road for two or three miles. He stopped in a clearing, locked the car and started up a trail which led into the hills.

Through the silent woods the morning air felt brisk and refreshing to him. He was thinking rapidly as he walked. "Kirk will head for his uncle's ol' cabin in the pine woods near the top of Purple Ridge, and with the head start I have, I'll be there to meet him. He has a long walk from where he had to leave his car and when he shows I'll be sitting up on the side of the hill overlooking the clearing the cabin is in. I'll have him cold!"

Sam sniffed the air appreciatively and tightened his jacket collar. In the late autumn the trees were stark against the sky, like uplifted arms. He sniffed again and set himself to the climbing path before him.

Martha was still sitting at the kitchen table when the oldest boy stuck his head around the corner of the door and asked, "Where's pa gone so early?"

Martha raised her head. "Johnny, what are you doing up? Get back to bed. You can sleep an hour before it's chore time."

"Okay, ma, but where's pa?"

Martha looked at her insistent son and said bitterly, "He's gone hunting, Johnny — hunting for his pleasure."

Clouds obscured the rising sun and the tree tops bowed and danced in the brisk wind. Sam loved the woods. How many times his job as sheriff almost came between him and his love for hunting and just being outdoors. If old Judge Permians had his way, Sam would spend half his time in court as a witness. Sam chuckled to himself. He let his deputies take care of all the petty stuff. It meant a lower salary, what with extra deputies, but he still did all right by his family.

He reached a high point on the trail and began to descend around the shoulder of the mountain. After an hour on the trail again, he started to climb and within fifteen minutes had reached a spot a few hundred feet above a small cabin perched in a clearing overlooking the valley and farms below. Sam studied the silent, deserted clearing and settled himself comfortably for what might be a long wait.

His thoughts turned back to Al and the hunting trip. He had been planning the trip for a long time. He had even ordered the special shells he had read about in a hunting magazine. He could picture the bright blue and red boxes clearly in his mind. With pleasure he remembered the amazement on Al's face when he showed him the range and spread the shot had. The men were not leaving until dusk. Maybe, just maybe he would join them.

The noonday sun tried vainly to peek through the overcast as Sam, for the tenth time, checked the bolt action of his rifle. Satisfied, he was about to shift his position when he heard a crunch of dry leaves and twigs. He had a view of a man's feet entering the clearing from a trail on Sam's side of the cabin.

Sam lifted his rifle, flipped off the safety, and followed Kirk as he headed toward the cabin. Kirk wore a heavy jacket with the hood up as protection against the rising wind. Sam could not see his face, but he remembered the solid, good-natured smile which belied the man's treacherous nature. As Kirk stood for a moment, looking over the empty area around the cabin, Sam took careful aim and slowly squeezed the trigger.

Kirk spun around from the impact of the bullet and dropped limply to the ground. Sam worked the bolt, arming the Winchester again. He waited a moment before slowly picking his way down the hillside. The body lay face down, arms outflung, but Sam continued to approach warily. Finally, as he stood over the body, he lowered the rifle and with a booted foot rolled the body over. The lifeless face and staring eyes were framed by the hood which flapped in the wind. A bristled, dark black mustache made his pale face seem even whiter. Sam stood motionless for a long time until the truth eventually reached his numb brain. Kirk had been known far and wide for his light blond hair.

## Contributors

JOHN P. BROWNE is a regular contributor of poetry and short stories to the *Quarterly*. He turns to philosophical allegory in "A Story," and paints a word picture for us in "An Island Morning."

LOUIS GEIB is the lone Freshman representative in this issue. "Spring" is his first *Quarterly* appearance.

DAVID R. MITCHELL is a Senior English major; "The Search of Peter Quince" is his first contribution to the *Quarterly*.

ROBERT HALL, another Senior majoring in English, presents in this issue the results of his study of Graham Greene.

MICHAEL BLACK is known to *Quarterly* readers for his "The Coming of Patrick" which appeared in the Spring issue; "Promise" is a short story with more Irish flavor.

DAVID RYAN, in his first *Quarterly* contribution, presents an irony-filled thriller in "Open Season."

# Contributors

JOHN F. BROWN was a prominent figure in the history of the United States. He was a member of the Continental Congress and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. He was also a member of the first Congress and a signer of the Constitution. He was a member of the first Congress and a signer of the Constitution. He was a member of the first Congress and a signer of the Constitution.

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