Home Sweet Home

Donald C. Ohl*

*Iowa State College

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Abstract

FOR all its destruction, there is something powerful in a flood, something spell-binding to watch. . . . People moving. I had seen them on the Autobahn, riding in the old buses, those rust and green camouflaged buses that different groups had commandeered, fully loaded and sometimes flying red flags.
points, the old people, the mothers, the pregnant women, the children, old at their young age. You separated them and classified them. These to Eastern Europe on the train to Leipzig, these to the West, and the Jews? They weren’t wanted anywhere. So you shipped everyone on, somewhere, and wondered if they would ever stop coming.

Well, soon it would be chow time. Sergeant Wales would have to get some guard at the door, for there were always the same stories . . . My man is sick, my children are small . . . and always the same answer—“I’m sorry. We can’t permit you to carry out food without special permission. You see, so many people try to get more than their share that way. We must divide it evenly among you all.” Sometimes there would be an argument involving bits of Russian, bits of German and some English along with a wild waving of hands and gesturing. Generally the answer was accepted meekly.

But the food itself—a large slab of black bread with margerine or lard, soup in tin cans and black coffee. The heavy odor of the black bread, spicy but sour, clung to the wooden kitchen all day. And the people—how they watched for the door to open, how they watched a GI eating an apple or orange that he had saved from his meal . . .

The flood had spent itself. Behind it are the muddy plains and the small pools.

—Burnell Held, Ag Ec., Sr.

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_A Little House, green garden, Birdsong, the daily argument—and thou._

GEORGE settled down comfortably on the sofa and began reading the evening paper. His wife was ironing in the next room. The house was too warm. He drowsed and in a few minutes the paper slipped slowly down into his lap. For a while the only sounds in the house were the rhythmic strokes of the iron and the rustle of the crumpled paper, disturbed by his breathing.
“George?”
The iron slid smoothly, mechanically over the white cloth.
“George!” Her voice was sharp, metallic and sped like a thrown knife to its target.
He stirred and jerked the newspaper up in front of him.
“What?”
“I don’t think it’s very warm in here, George.”
“Uh-huh.” He read about Gloria Camp, the movie star. Another divorce. Hot little . . ., he thought. Hasn’t found anyone that can satisfy her. Now I’ll bet I could—
“George!”
“Yeh?”
“Did you hear what I said? I’m freezing. There’s goose pimples all over my arms. I’m cold, George.”
“You’re not kidding,” he muttered.
“What did you say?” She stopped ironing. “Go down and look at the furnace, George.”
“In a minute.” He saw that Horowitz was giving a concert. God, he mused, it must be wonderful to play like him. I’d get a piano but she says it’d make her nervous. I don’t suppose it would do any good to—
“George!”
He got up wearily. Cold! Christ, it must be 95 in here. He went downstairs, slammed the furnace door a couple of times, rattled the coal shovel. Then he came up and sat down again.
He read about a man that had inherited two million dollars from an uncle in Australia. Jesus, he thought, what a break. That guy’s set all right. And what have I got? Five years of married life and forty bucks a week. Two million dollars! Wouldn’t I tell the boss to take his lousy job and—
“George?”
“Yes, honey.”
“When are you going to fix the radio, George?”
“What’s wrong with it?”
“You know. I’ve been after you for two weeks to fix it, but would you turn your hand over, no! I guess not. You’d lay there every night with that paper instead—if it isn’t the paper its one of those crazy classics you’re so hot about—”
“And what’s wrong with classics?”
“God—you and art—that combination gives me a big belly-ache. I know what you want. You want to hide from life—you
think all of us are a bunch of stupid fools—you're too damn good for us, aren't you, George?"

"By God, you know, I think you're right."

"That's just what I thought. You're never gonna get anywhere. If you'd get your nose out of a book long enough you might get a promotion like Tom Willis got—"

"Oh, to hell with Tom Willis. And you, too!" He got up and threw down the paper. "Why don't you go live with Tom Willis—Tom and the Tom-cat." He laughed viciously.

"It's a sure thing he wouldn't threaten me—"

"By God, you and your yap-yap would drive anyone crazy—same every damn night—George this and George that—"

"I work and cook—"

"Yap—yap—Turn it loose! I'm going to bed!" He thundered up the stairs.

She stood rigid. Her mind was choked. Then she picked up the iron and pressed it hard against one of his white shirts. The strong odor of scorched cloth filled the room.

—Donald C. Ohl, Sci. So.

Waiting's End

The last bell-like chord of "The Submerged Cathedral" faded into the dark silence, and my hands rested on the piano keys. I opened my eyes, and there she was, my Durry, standing before me. My eyes looked into hers, and suddenly I was no longer tired. I could see nothing else; thought ceased.