"... Members of the Faculty..."

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Abstract

The girl walked past the small lake on campus. It was a lovely Indian summer afternoon in November and it was pleasant just to pass through the clumps of trees and bushes, stepping over or around the occasional couples, and see them fluttering breezily in bright and warm autumn colors and feel the soft air...
... Members of the Faculty Shall Not Allow Themselves To Be Influenced By Any Cash, Gratuities, or Services Offered By ...

By Ervin Wolff

The girl walked past the small lake on campus. It was a lovely Indian summer afternoon in November and it was pleasant just to pass through the clumps of trees and bushes, stepping over or around the occasional couples, and see them fluttering breezily in bright and warm autumn colors and feel the soft air. But she had to think, to think and finally, to decide.

She was a short, almost stocky girl, with the full breasts and hips of a fertility goddess. Her hair was dark and thick, hanging past her shoulders in a modified ponytail, and her complexion had a lovely smoothness reminding you of a packet of newly-opened paper before it has been stained with words or fingerprints. Her walk was a smooth rolling movement of hips and legs that caught the eyes of men students she passed and caused them to watch her walk away with almost as much pleasure as they had watched her walk towards them.

She had been putting off the deciding and even the thinking for weeks now, ever since the mid-term slip with a predicted failure had been given to her in English 304. A grad student in household equipment and biochemistry technol-
ogy doesn't know much English past the filling in of experiment forms and labelling bottles. She had no need for such a course, she thought, why do I have to take it and what's more, why do I have to pass it? Yet she needed the grade in spite of having done well in her other courses: Theoretical and Applied Test Tube Scrubbing, The Centrifuge; Its History and Traditions, Toaster Seminar, and Coffee for the Ph. D.

Her English teacher, she knew, was a complete and utter cad. His name was Mr. Oboleskovich, which none of the students could ever remember or pronounce, so he had condescended to allow them to call him Mr. Oboe, a nickname which he said he had picked up in his undergraduate days. They had heard, also, that he was an immoral man, that he drank, and smoked huge cigars and that women had been seen coming and going at his apartment at any and all hours. And he weighed three hundred pounds.

She knew just about what was expected from her, what he was thinking of when he looked at her in class during the readings from "Lady Chatterly's Lover." He claimed it was a good book, that it was not pornography, but if it was so good why was his class the only one using it throughout the entire University? And why did he lock the door during the class discussions?

She needed the grade so desperately in that course and she needed so desperately to hang onto her self-respect. If only she hadn't entered college in the first place. Once started, she had become entangled in the web of getting an ever-increasing grade point. You needed it for a job after graduation, they said. You needed it for entrance to grad school, they said. You had to have it to make your parents proud and to keep America free, they all said. They were probably right; so many people couldn't have made the same mistake. When Mr. Oboe was in college, he had undoubtedly taken nothing but snap courses, being an English major. Those simple literature courses where you read some dull old book and listen to lectures on the theme of it and all that. All you had to do to pass those courses was write down everything the instructor said and then write it back down for the tests. She knew; she had seen her friends do it.

She glanced down at the skirt that flipped at her knees.
as she walked. She hated the short skirts in style this time. She had liked them till she had Mr. Oboe for English. She knew he was always looking at her legs during his lectures.

He was always telling dirty jokes in class and looking at her when she blushed at them. And in their conferences, he kept saying things like, "we will have to work closely together this quarter to keep your grades up," and "this kind of course calls for close cooperation between teacher and pupil, don't you think, Miss Taylor?"

She was always a little afraid of him in the small room he had for an office and she tried to make the conference as short as possible, telling him she had classes right after each one and couldn't stay very long. When he stood up, she only came to his tie-tack; he was quite tall. (The rumor was six-ten.) Even sitting down, he was impressive. She remembered the time she had seen him downtown at the saloon, sitting in a booth with a pitcher of beer and singing songs with three other faculty members. Probably from the English department. She wasn't shocked at it. Oh, maybe a little but, after all, English teachers were human too. Some of her best friends were English majors.

The climax of all his hints and double-meaning remarks had been when she had gone to see him the last week of the quarter. She honestly had wanted to see if there was some way for her to keep her grade up in the course. That was when he had told her she was failing. He said that possibly they could work something out but he had to run then. Could she drop by at his apartment tomorrow? She had almost slapped him, then. But she needed the grade so she had said yes, she could.

But after leaving his office, she had decided no. No course was worth that! And she was still thinking about her decision as she walked in the fine autumn weather. She thought about it as she passed the lake and as she went under the trees and as she knocked on the door of the apartment with the brass plate flashing "Mr. Oboleskovich."

He opened the door and stared out over her head. Seeing no one, he dropped his eyes and looked at her with obviously false surprise. He pushed the door fully open and gestured her in with a hand holding a bottle of that Italian wine, the kind in the straw-wrapped bottles. Inside, to the far left, she
caught a glimpse of a table set with two places, lighted by candles and a soft glow from discreetly placed lamps.

She awoke as the sun got far enough across the bed to reach her eyes and warm her face. She looked out the window at the bright, late-morning, autumn sun and stretched her naked legs out under the covers, pressing her toes down and out. Then she sat up and stretched her arms up above her head, shaking her hair back, and gasping in the comfortable exertion. She looked to her side and said, “Oboe?”

He was sleeping heavily on his back, one arm bent back over his head and the other lying out to one side. He was half out of the covers and his big chest with its dark hair lifted and fell in one big wave of movement and then stopped, waiting for another.

She laughed throatily and lay down next to him, dropping her head onto his chest and nuzzling up into the hollow of his shoulder and neck. She rubbed her hand down across the springy coarseness of hair and flesh. She patted his belly, the muscles rubbery and relaxed now. Then, giggling, she grabbed a pinch of hair and pulled sharply several times. He stirred and swatted absently at her hand. She pulled again. His eyes opened and rolled around till he realized what was happening. He grinned and caressed her fondly. She nibbled his ear and asked, “Did I pass the course?”

He chuckled and then laughed, hugging her close to him, and she laughed, too, feeling his chest rumble as he said, “Hell, no. Do you think you can bribe the faculty??!”

Weltanschauung

By Don A. Graybill

thalidomide babies and syphilitic old men are beautiful

yes, because we know who made them so

all glory to His name