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## UNCLE WIGGILY IN CONNECTICUT

IT was almost three o'clock when Mary Jane finally found Eloise's house. She explained to Eloise, who had come out to the driveway to meet her, that everything had been absolutely perfect, that she had remembered the way exactly, until she had turned off the Merrick Parkway. Eloise said, "Merrick Parkway, baby," and reminded Mary Jane that she had found the house twice before, but Mary Jane just wailed something ambiguous, something about her box of Kleenex, and rushed back to her convertible. Eloise turned up the collar of her camel's-hair coat, put her back to the wind, and waited. Mary Jane was back in a minute using a leaf of Kleenex and still looking upset, even fouled. Eloise said cheerfully that the whole damn lunch was burned—sweetbreads, everything—but Mary Jane said she'd eaten anyway, on the road. As the two walked toward the house, Eloise asked Mary Jane how it happened she had the day off. Mary Jane said she didn't have the whole day off; it was just that Mr. Weynburg had a hernia and was home in Larchmont, and she had to bring him his mail and take a couple of letters every afternoon. She asked Eloise, "Just exactly what is a hernia, anyway?" Eloise, dropping her cigarette on the soiled snow underfoot, said she didn't actually know but that Mary Jane didn't have to worry much about getting one. Mary Jane said, "Oh," and the two girls entered the house.

Twenty minutes later, they were finishing their first highball in the living room and were talking in the manner peculiar, probably limited, to former college roommates. They had an even stronger bond between them; neither of them had graduated. Eloise had left college in the middle of her sophomore year, in 1942, a week after she had been caught with a soldier in a closed elevator on the third floor of her residence hall. Mary Jane had left—same year, same class, almost the same month—to marry an aviation cadet stationed in Jacksonville, Florida, a lean, air-minded boy from Dill, Mississippi, who had spent two of the three months Mary Jane had been married to him in jail for stabbing an M.P.

"No," Eloise was saying. "It was actually red." She was stretched out on the couch, her thin but very pretty legs crossed at the ankles.

"I heard it was blond," Mary Jane repeated. She was seated in the blue

straight chair. "Wuddayacallit swore up and down it was blond."

"Uh-uh. Definitely," Eloise yawned. "I was almost in the room with her when she dyed it. What's the matter? Aren't there any cigarettes in there?"

"It's all right. I have a whole pack," Mary Jane said. "Somewhere." She searched through her handbag.

"That dopey maid," Eloise said without moving from the couch. "I dropped two brand-new cartons in front of her nose about an hour ago. She'll be in, any minute, to ask me what to do with them. Where the hell was I?"

"Thieringer," Mary Jane prompted, lighting one of her own cigarettes.

"Oh, yeah. I remember exactly. She dyed it the night before she married that Frank Henke. You remember him at all?"

"Just sort of. Little ole private? Terribly unattractive?"

"Unattractive. God! He looked like an unwashed Bela Lugosi."

Mary Jane threw back her head and roared. "Marvellous," she said, coming back into drinking position.

"Gimme your glass," Eloise said, swinging her stocking feet to the floor and standing up. "Honestly, that dope. I did everything but get Lew to make love to her to get her to come out here with us. Now I'm sorry I—Where'd you get that thing?"

"This?" said Mary Jane, touching a cameo brooch at her throat. "I had it at school, for goodness' sake. It was Mother's."

"God," Eloise said, with the empty glasses in her hands. "I don't have one damn thing holy to wear. If Lew's mother ever dies—ha, ha—she'll prob-

ably leave me some old monogrammed icepick or something."

"How're you getting along with her these days, anyway?"

"Don't be funny," Eloise said on her way to the kitchen.

"This is positively the last one for me!" Mary Jane called after her.

"Like hell it is. Who called who? And who came two hours late? You're gonna stick around till I'm sick of you. The hell with your lousy career."

Mary Jane threw back her head and roared again, but Eloise had already gone into the kitchen.

With little or no wherewithal for being left alone in a room, Mary Jane stood up and walked over to the window. She drew aside the curtain and leaned her wrist on one of the cross-pieces between panes, but, feeling grit, she removed it, rubbed it clean with her other hand, and stood up more erectly. Outside, the filthy slush was visibly turning to ice. Mary Jane let go the curtain and wandered back to the blue chair, passing two heavily stocked bookcases without glancing at any of the titles. Seated, she opened her handbag and used the mirror to look at her teeth. She closed her lips and ran her tongue hard over her upper front teeth, then took another look.

"It's getting so icy out," she said, turning. "God, that was quick. Didn't you put any soda in them?"

Eloise, with a fresh drink in each hand, stopped short. She extended both index fingers, gun-muzzle style, and said, "Don't nobody move. I got the whole damn place surrounded."

Mary Jane laughed and put away her mirror.

Eloise came forward with the drinks. She placed Mary Jane's insecurely in its coaster but kept her own in hand. She stretched out on the couch again. "Wuddaya think she's doing out there?" she said. "She's sitting on her big, black butt reading 'The Robe.' I dropped the ice trays taking them out. She actually looked up annoyed."

"This is my last. And I mean it," Mary Jane said, picking up her drink. "Oh, listen! You know who I saw last week? On the main floor of Lord & Taylor's?"

"Mm-hm," said Eloise, adjusting a pillow under her head. "Akim Tamiroff."

"Who?" said Mary Jane. "Who's he?"

"Akim Tamiroff. He's in the movies. He always says, 'You make beeg joke—hah?' I love him. . . . There isn't one





damn pillow in this house that I can stand. Who'd you see?"

"Jackson. She was—"

"Which one?"

"I don't know. The one that was in our Psych class, that always—"

"Both of them were in our Psych class."

"Well. The one with the terrific—"

"Marcia Louise. I ran into her once, too. She talk your ear off?"

"God, yes. But you know what she told me, though? Dr. Whiting's dead. She said she had a letter from Barbara Hill saying Whiting got cancer last summer and died and all. She only weighed sixty-two pounds. When she died. Isn't that terrible?"

"No."

"Eloise, you're getting hard as nails."

"Mm. What else'd she say?"

"Oh, she just got back from Europe. Her husband was stationed in Germany or something, and she was with him. They had a forty-seven-room house, she said, just with one other couple, and about ten servants. Her own horse, and the groom they had used to be Hitler's own private riding master or something. Oh, and she started to tell me how she almost got raped by a colored soldier. Right on the main floor of Lord & Taylor's she started to tell me—you know Jackson. She said he was her husband's chauffeur, and he was driving her to market or something one morning. She said she was so scared she didn't even—"

"Wait just a second." Eloise raised her head and her voice. "Is that you, Ramona?"

"Yes," a small child's voice answered.

"Close the front door after you, please," Eloise called.

"Is that Ramona? Oh, I'm dying to see her. Do you realize I haven't seen her since she had her—"

"Ramona," Eloise shouted, with her



*"I've seen this brewing for some time."*

eyes shut, "go out in the kitchen and let Grace take your galoshes off."

"All right," said Ramona. "C'mon, Jimmy."

"Oh, I'm dying to see her," Mary Jane said. "Oh, God! Look what I did. I'm terribly sorry, El."

"Leave it. Leave it," said Eloise. "I hate this damn rug anyway. I'll get you another."

"No, look, I have more than half left!" Mary Jane held up her glass.

"Sure?" said Eloise. "Gimme a cigarette."

Mary Jane extended her pack of cigarettes, saying, "Oh, I'm dying to see her. Who does she look like now?"

Eloise struck a light. "Akim Tamiroff."

"No, seriously."

"Lew. She looks like Lew. When

his mother comes over, the three of them look like triplets." Without sitting up, Eloise reached for a stack of ashtrays on the far side of the cigarette table. She successfully lifted off the top one and set it down on her stomach. "What I need is a cocker spaniel or something," she said. "Somebody that looks like me."

"How're her eyes now?" Mary Jane asked. "I mean they're not any worse or anything, are they?"

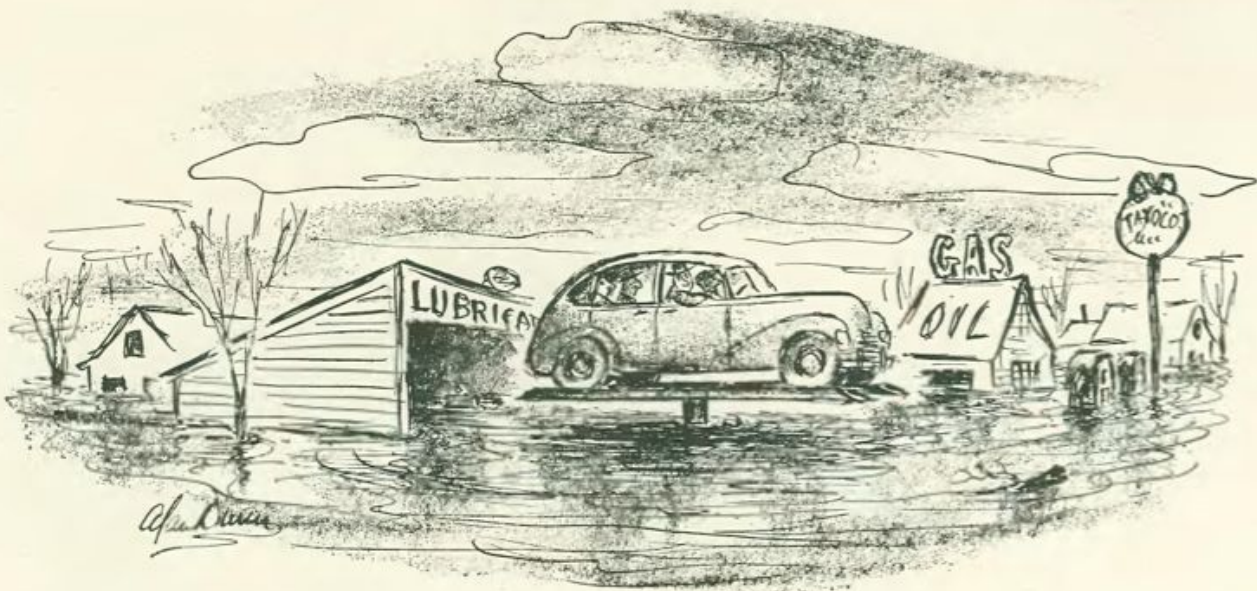
"God! Not that I know of."

"Can she see at all without her glasses? I mean if she gets up in the night to go to the john or something?"

"She won't tell anybody. She's lousy with secrets."

Mary Jane turned around in her chair. "Well, hello, Ramona!" she said. "Oh, what a pretty dress!" She set





down her drink. "I'll bet you don't even remember me, Ramona."

"Certainly she does. Who's the lady, Ramona?"

"Mary Jane," said Ramona, and scratched herself.

"Marvellous!" said Mary Jane. "Ramona, will you give me a little kiss?"

"Stop that," Eloise said to Ramona.

Ramona stopped scratching herself.

"Will you give me a little kiss, Ramona?" Mary Jane asked again.

"I don't like to kiss people."

Eloise snorted, and asked, "Where's Jimmy?"

"He's here."

"Who's Jimmy?" Mary Jane asked Eloise.

"Oh, God! Her beau. Goes where she goes. Does what she does. All very hoopla."

"Really?" said Mary Jane enthusiastically. She leaned forward. "Do you have a beau, Ramona?"

Ramona's eyes, behind thick, counter-myopia lenses, did not reflect even the smallest part of Mary Jane's enthusiasm.

"Mary Jane asked you a question, Ramona," Eloise said.

Ramona inserted a finger into her small, broad nose.

"Stop that," Eloise said. "Mary Jane asked you if you have a beau."

"Yes," said Ramona, busy with her nose.

"Ramona," Eloise said. "Cut that out. But immediately."

Ramona put her hand down.

"Well, I think that's just wonderful," Mary Jane said. "What's his

name? Will you tell me his name, Ramona? Or is it a big secret?"

"Jimmy," Ramona said.

"Jimmy? Oh, I love the name Jimmy! Jimmy what, Ramona?"

"Jimmy Jimmereeno," said Ramona.

"Stand still," said Eloise.

"Well! That's quite a name. Where is Jimmy? Will you tell me, Ramona?"

"Here," said Ramona.

Mary Jane looked around, then looked back at Ramona, smiling as provocatively as possible. "Here where, honey?"

"Here," said Ramona. "I'm holding his hand."

"I don't get it," Mary Jane said to Eloise, who was finishing her drink.

"Don't look at me," said Eloise.

Mary Jane looked back at Ramona. "Oh, I see. Jimmy's just a make-believe little boy. Marvellous." Mary Jane leaned forward cordially. "How do you do, Jimmy?" she said.

"He won't talk to you," said Eloise.

"Ramona, tell Mary Jane about Jimmy."

"Tell her *what*?"

"Stand up, please. . . Tell Mary Jane how Jimmy looks."

"He has green eyes and black hair."

"What else?"

"No mommy and no daddy."

"What else?"

"No freckles."

"What else?"

"A sword."

"What else?"

"I don't know," said Ramona, and began to scratch herself again.

"He sounds beautiful!" Mary Jane said, and leaned even farther forward in her chair. "Ramona. Tell me. Did Jimmy take off his galoshes, too, when you came in?"

"He has boots," Ramona said.

"Marvellous," Mary Jane said to Eloise.

"You just think so. I get it all day long. Jimmy eats with her. Takes a bath with her. Sleeps with her. She sleeps way over to one side of the bed, so's not to roll over and hurt him."

Looking absorbed and delighted with this information, Mary Jane took in her lower lip, then released it to ask, "Where'd he get that name, though?"

"Jimmy Jimmereeno? God knows."

"Probably from some little boy in the neighborhood."

Eloise, yawning, shook her head. "There are no little boys in the neighborhood. No children at all. They call me Fertile Fanny behind my—"

"Mommy," Ramona said, "can I go out and play?"

Eloise looked at her. "You just came in," she said.

"Jimmy wants to go out again."

"Why, may I ask?"

"He left his sword outside."

"Oh, him and his goddam sword," Eloise said. "Well. Go ahead. Put your galoshes back on."

"Can I have this?" Ramona said, taking a burned match out of the ash-tray.

"May I have this. Yes. Stay out of the street, please."

"Goodbye, Ramona!" Mary Jane said musically.



"Bye," said Ramona. "C'mon, Jimmy."

Eloise lunged suddenly to her feet. "Gimme your glass," she said.

"No, really, El. I'm supposed to be in *Larchmont*. I mean Mr. Weynburg's so sweet, I hate to—"

"Call up and say you were killed. Let go of that damn glass."

"No, honestly, El. I mean it's getting so *terribly* icy. I have hardly any anti-freeze in the car. I mean if I don't—"

"Let it freeze. Go phone. Say you're dead," said Eloise. "Gimme that."

"Well... Where's the phone?"

"It went," said Eloise, carrying the empty glasses and walking toward the dining room, "—this-a-way." She stopped short on the floor board between the living room and the dining room and executed a grind and a bump. Mary Jane giggled.

"I MEAN you didn't really *know* Walt," said Eloise at a quarter of five, lying on her back on the floor, a drink balanced upright on her small-breasted chest. "He was the only boy I ever knew that could make me laugh. I mean *really* laugh." She looked over at Mary Jane. "You remember that night—our last year—when that crazy Louise Hermanson busted in the room wearing that black brassiere she bought in Chicago?"

Mary Jane giggled. She was lying on her stomach on the couch, her chin on the armrest, facing Eloise. Her drink was on the floor, within reach.

"Well, he could make me laugh *that* way," Eloise said. "He could do it when he talked to me. He could do it over the phone. He could even do it in a letter. And the best thing about it was that he didn't even try to be funny—he just *was* funny." She turned her head slightly toward Mary Jane. "Hey, how 'bout throwing me a cigarette?"

"I can't reach 'em," Mary Jane said.

"Nuts to you." Eloise looked up at the ceiling again. "Once," she said, "I fell down. I used to wait for him at the bus stop, right outside the PX, and he showed up late once, just as the bus was pulling out. We started to run for it, and I fell and twisted my ankle. He said, 'Poor Uncle Wiggily.' He meant my ankle. Poor old Uncle Wiggily, he called it. . . . God, he was nice."

"Doesn't Lew have a sense of humor?" Mary Jane said.

"What?"

"Doesn't Lew have a sense of humor?"

"Oh, God! Who knows? Yes. I guess so. He laughs at cartoons and stuff." Eloise raised her head, lifted her drink from her chest, and drank from it.

"Well," Mary Jane said. "That isn't everything. I mean that isn't everything."

"What isn't?"

"Oh... you know. Laughing and stuff."

"Who says it isn't?" Eloise said.

"Listen, if you're not gonna be a nun or something, you might as well laugh."

Mary Jane giggled. "You're *terrible*," she said.

"Ah, God, he was nice," Eloise said.

"He was either funny or sweet. Not

that damn little-boy sweet, either. It was a special kind of sweet. You know what he did once?"

"Uh-uh," Mary Jane said.

"We were on the train going from Trenton to New York—it was just right after he was drafted. It was cold in the car and I had my coat sort of over us. I remember I had Joyce Morrow's cardigan on underneath—you remember that darling blue cardigan she had?"

Mary Jane nodded, but Eloise didn't look over to get the nod.

"Well, he sort of had his hand on my stomach. You know. Anyway, all of a sudden he said my stomach was so beautiful he wished some officer would come up and order him to stick his other hand through the window. He said he



"Hey, Sam—Gypsy Rose Lee!"



wanted to do what was fair. Then he took his hand away and told the conductor to throw his shoulders back. He told him if there was one thing he couldn't stand it was a man who didn't look proud of his uniform. The conductor just told him to go back to sleep." Eloise reflected a moment, then said, "It wasn't always what he said, but how he said it. You know."

"Have you ever told Lew about him—I mean, at all?"

"Oh," Eloise said, "I started to, once. But the first thing he asked me was what his rank was."

"What was his rank?"

"Ha!" said Eloise.

"No, I just meant—"

Eloise laughed suddenly, from her diaphragm. "You know what he said once? He said he felt he was advancing in the Army, but in a different direction from everybody else. He said that when he'd get his first promotion, instead of getting stripes he'd have his sleeves taken away from him. He said when he'd get to be a general, he'd be stark naked. All he'd be wearing would be a little infantry button in his navel." Eloise looked over at Mary Jane, who wasn't laughing. "Don't you think that's funny?"

"Yes. Only, why don't you tell Lew about him sometime, though?"

"Why? Because he's too damn unintelligent, that's why," Eloise said. "Besides. Listen to me, career girl. If you ever get married again, don't tell your husband *anything*. Do you hear me?"

"Why?" said Mary Jane.

"Because I say so, that's why," said Eloise. "They wanna think you spent your whole life vomiting every time a boy came near you. I'm not kidding, either. Oh, you can tell them stuff. But never honestly. I mean never *honestly*. If you tell 'em you once knew a handsome boy, you gotta say in the same breath that he was *too* handsome. And if you tell 'em you knew a witty boy, you gotta tell 'em he was kind of a smart aleck, though, or a wise guy. If you *don't*, they hit you over the head with the poor boy every time they get a chance." Eloise paused to drink from her glass and to think. "Oh," she said, "they'll listen very *maturely* and all that. They'll even look intelligent as hell. But don't let it fool you. Believe me. You'll go through *hell* if you ever give 'em any credit for intelligence. Take my word."

Mary Jane, looking depressed, raised her chin from the armrest of the couch.

## LAST COCKCROW

Sharp as the flash of torch, or spark  
Of match struck in the cold and heavy dark,  
Cockcrow cracks through the air.  
Ear, sullen with sleep, flinches and hates the sound  
As eyeball shrinks from the cruel dazzle of light;  
Hearing and sight both wince and both refuse.  
But now, beyond the tall horizon arches,  
Summoned, the great commander, the sun, marches,  
Conquers the earth, relentlessly subdues  
All shadows and all sleepers, the deep ground, the cold night.  
Nothing now can stop this day from being fair.

—VALENTINE ACKLAND

For a change, she supported her chin on her forearm. She thought over Eloise's advice. "You can't call Lew not intelligent," she said aloud.

"Who can't?"

"I mean isn't he intelligent?" Mary Jane said innocently.

"Oh," said Eloise, "what's the use of talking? Let's drop it. I'll just depress you. Shut me up."

"Well, wudga marry him for, then?" Mary Jane said.

"Oh, God! I don't know. He told me he loved Jane Austen. He told me her books meant a great deal to him. That's exactly what he said. I found out after we were married that he hadn't even read *one* of her books. You know who his favorite author is?"

Mary Jane shook her head.

"L. Manning Vines. Ever hear of him?"

"Uh-uh."

"Neither did I. Neither did anybody else. He wrote a book about four men that starved to death in Alaska. Lew doesn't remember the name of it, but it's the most beautifully *written* book he's ever read. *Christ!* He isn't even honest enough to come right out and say he liked it because it was about four guys that starved to death in an igloo or something. He has to say it was beautifully *written*."

"You're too critical," Mary Jane said. "I mean you're too critical. Maybe it *was* a good—"

"Take my word for it, it couldn't've been," Eloise said. She thought for a

moment, then added, "At least, you have a job. I mean at least you—"

"But listen, though," said Mary Jane. "Do you think you'll ever tell him Walt was killed, even? I mean he wouldn't be jealous, would he, if he knew Walt was—you know. Killed and everything."

"Oh, lover! You poor, innocent little career girl," said Eloise. "He'd be worse. He'd be a *ghoul*. Listen. All he knows is that I went around with somebody named Walt—some *wisecracking* G.I. The last thing I'd do would be to tell him he was killed. But the last thing. And if I did—which I wouldn't—but if I *did*, I'd tell him he was killed in action."

Mary Jane pushed her chin farther forward over the edge of her forearm.

"El..." she said.

"Uh?"

"Why won't you tell me how he was killed? I *swear* I won't tell anybody. Honestly. Please."

"No."

"Please. Honestly. I won't tell anybody."

Eloise finished her drink and replaced the empty glass upright on her chest. "You'd tell Akim Tamiroff," she said.

"No, I wouldn't! I mean I wouldn't tell any—"

"Oh," said Eloise, "his regiment was resting someplace. It was between battles or something, this friend of his said that wrote me. Walt and some other boy were putting this little Japanese stove in a package. Some colonel wanted to send it home. Or they were taking it out of the package to rewrap it—I don't know exactly. Anyway, it was all full of gasoline and junk and it exploded in their faces. The other boy just lost an eye." Eloise began to cry. She put her hand around the empty glass on her chest to steady it.

Mary Jane slid off the couch and, on







her knees, took three steps over to Eloise and began to stroke her forehead. "Don't cry, El. Don't cry."

"Who's crying?" Eloise said.

"I know, but don't. I mean it isn't worth it or anything."

The front door opened.

"That's Ramona back," Eloise said nasally. "Do me a favor. Go out in the kitchen and tell whosis to give her her dinner early. Willyya?"

"All right, if you promise not to cry, though."

"I promise. Go on. I don't feel like going out to that damn kitchen right this minute."

Mary Jane stood up, losing and recovering her balance, and left the room.

She was back in less than two minutes, with Ramona running ahead of her. Ramona ran as flat-footed as possible, trying to get the maximum noise out of her open galoshes.

"She wouldn't let me take her galoshes off," Mary Jane said.

Eloise, still lying on her back on the floor, was using her handkerchief. She spoke into it, addressing Ramona. "Go out and tell Grace to take your galoshes off. You know you're not supposed to come into the—"

"She's in the lavatory," Ramona said.

Eloise put away her handkerchief and hoisted herself to a sitting position. "Gimme your foot," she said. "Sit down, first, please. . . . Not *there*—*here*. God!"

On her knees, looking under the table for her cigarettes, Mary Jane said, "Hey. Guess what happened to Jimmy."

"No idea. Other foot. *Other foot*."

"He got runned over," said Mary Jane. "Isn't that tragic?"

"I saw Skipper with a bone," Ramona told Eloise.

"What happened to Jimmy?" Eloise said to her.

"He got runned over and killed. I saw Skipper with a bone, and he wouldn't—"

"Gimme your forehead a second," Eloise said. She reached out and felt Ramona's forehead. "You feel a little feverish. Go tell Grace you're to have your dinner upstairs. Then you're to go straight to bed. I'll be up later. Go on, now, please. Take these *with you*."

Ramona slowly giant-stepped her way out of the room.

"Throw me one," Eloise said to Mary Jane. "Let's have another drink."

Mary Jane carried a cigarette over to Eloise. "Isn't that something? About Jimmy? What an imagination!"

"Mm. You go get the drinks, huh? And bring the bottle . . . I don't wanna go out there. The whole damn place smells like orange juice."

AT five minutes past seven, the phone rang. Eloise got up from the window seat and felt in the dark for her shoes. She couldn't find them. In her stocking feet, she walked steadily, almost languidly, toward the phone. The ringing didn't disturb Mary Jane, who was asleep on the couch, face down.

"Hello," Eloise said into the phone, without having turned the overhead light on. "Look, I can't meet you. Mary Jane's here. She's got her car parked right in front of me and she can't find the key. I can't get out. We spent about twenty minutes looking for it in the wuddayacallit—the snow and stuff. Maybe you can get a lift with Dick and Mildred." She listened. "Oh. Well, that's tough, kid. Why don't you boys form a platoon and march home? You can say that hut-hope-hoop-hoop business. You can be the big shot." She listened again. "I'm not funny," she said. "Really, I'm not. It's just my face." She hung up.

She walked, less steadily, back into the living room. At the window seat, she poured what was left in the bottle of Scotch into her glass. It made about





Chon  
Day

"They say that if his reviews aren't favorable,  
he gets a good spanking."

a finger. She drank it off, shivered, and sat down.

When Grace turned on the light in the dining room, Eloise jumped. Without getting up, she called in to Grace, "You better not serve until eight, Grace. Mr. Wengler'll be a little late."

Grace appeared in the dining-room light but didn't come forward. "The lady go?" she said.

"She's resting."

"Oh," said Grace. "Miz Wengler, I wondered if it'd be all right if my husband passed the evenin' here. I got plenty a room in my room, and he don't have to be back in New York till tomorrow mornin', and it's so bad out."

"Your husband? Where is he?"

"Well, right now," Grace said, "he's in the kitchen."

"Well, I'm afraid he can't spend the night here, Grace."

"Ma'am?"

"I say I'm afraid he can't spend the night here. I'm not running a hotel."

Grace stood for a moment, then said, "Yes, Ma'am," and went out to the kitchen.

Eloise left the living room and climbed the stairs, which were lighted very faintly by the overglow from the dining room. One of Ramona's ga-

loshes was lying on the landing. Eloise picked it up and threw it, with as much force as possible, over the side of the banister; it struck the foyer floor with a violent thump.

She snapped on the light in Ramona's room and held onto the switch, as if for support. She stood still for a moment looking at Ramona. Then she let go of the light switch and went quickly over to the bed.

"Ramona. Wake up. Wake up."

Ramona was sleeping far over on one side of the bed, her right buttock off the edge. Her glasses were on a little Donald Duck night table, folded neatly and laid stems down.

"Ramona!"

The child awoke with a sharp intake of breath. Her eyes opened wide, but she narrowed them almost at once. "Mommy?"

"I thought you told me Jimmy Jimmereeno was run over and killed."

"What?"

"You heard me," Eloise said. "Why are you sleeping way over here?"

"Because," said Ramona.

"Because why? Ramona, I don't feel like—"

"Because I don't want to hurt Mickey."

"Who?"

"Mickey," said Ramona, rubbing her nose. "Mickey Mickeranno."

Eloise raised her voice to a shriek. "You get in the center of that bed. Go on."

Ramona, extremely frightened, just looked up at Eloise.

"All right." Eloise grabbed Ramona's ankles and half lifted and half pulled her over to the middle of the bed. Ramona neither struggled nor cried; she let herself be moved without actually submitting to it.

"Now go to sleep," Eloise said, breathing heavily. "Close your eyes. . . . You heard me, close them."

Ramona closed her eyes.

Eloise went over to the light switch and flicked it off. But she stood for a long time in the doorway. Then, suddenly, she rushed, in the dark, over to the night table, banging her knee against the foot of the bed, but too full of purpose to feel pain. She picked up Ramona's glasses and, holding them in both hands, pressed them against her cheek. Tears rolled down her face, wetting the lenses. "Poor Uncle Wiggily," she said over and over again. Finally, she put the glasses back on the night table, lenses down.

She stooped over, losing her balance, and began to tuck in the blankets of Ramona's bed. Ramona was awake. She was crying and had been crying. Eloise kissed her wetly on the mouth and wiped the hair out of her eyes and then left the room.

She went downstairs, staggering now very badly, and wakened Mary Jane.

"Wuzzat? Who? Huh?" said Mary Jane, sitting bolt upright on the couch.

"Mary Jane. Listen. Please," Eloise said, sobbing. "You remember our freshman year, and I had that brown-and-yellow dress I bought in Boise, and Miriam Ball told me nobody wore those kind of dresses in New York, and I cried all night?" Eloise shook Mary Jane's arm. "I was a nice girl," she pleaded, "wasn't I?"

—J. D. SALINGER

Mr. Young, who is a member of the National Fisheries Institute Committee on Packing and Weighing Fillets, pointed to the fishing industry as one of the country's earliest, declaring that each year approximately five billion pounds of fish and shellfish are produced in this country. Of this, he said, three and one-half pounds are edible fish, the remainder is used for fish meal or fish oil production.—*Saratoga Springs (N.Y.) Saratogian*.

• Silliest industry we ever heard of.