

The Painter of Ghosts

(Continued From Page Two.)

By Hudson Strode

almost inaudibly and fervently, like a prayer of thanksgiving.

Then she asked what the boy had been told of his mother.

"I am afraid I have handled that clumsily," admitted Dr. Condon. "You see, one couldn't tell the truth. I said she was an invalid with some vague but terrible disease, but there was no suffering, and that she was being cured and well taken care of on an island in the Pacific—and some day she'd be coming home. That's been the hard part—the mother. And now I don't know what—"

Mrs. Maxon looked at him, read his thoughts, and said softly, "I have seen her kiss your photograph."

"And I have loved her all these years," the man answered.

Then he stood up. "Come with me," he said.

They passed through the crowds in the lobby and out along the gravel walk. Not a word was spoken, but the woman's intuition made her sense what was to happen. When the rows of blue hydrangeas ended they reached the entrance of the swimming pool. They stepped out on the tiled mosaic promenade. Some 20 swimmers were playing about in the water where the sun splashed through the shadows of the trees and made gold splashes on the dancing surface. Dr. Condon's eyes took a swift survey of the scene. Then he grasped Mrs. Maxon's arm and said, "See at the other end—just about to dive."

Mrs. Maxon looked where he directed. There, poised ready to make a run on the springboard, stood a well built blond youth in a black bathing suit. He ran, sprang high into the air, and made a clean drop into the water. "See that is the boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Maxon. "He's beautiful."

Then his face emerged and he

caught sight of Dr. Condon and his eyes lighted up and his red lips broke into a smile, and with a few strong overhand strokes he reached them. Climbing over the tiled curb, he stood there before them dripping wet and in radiant spirits, a marvelously handsome specimen of masculine youth, lithe and strong, with an engaging radiant smile.

Hal was presented to Mrs. Maxon. His manners were easy and graceful and his voice was full of music. Mrs. Maxon was thinking of the miniatures—they were much like him. The expression of the blue eyes was remarkably the same, and as he talked the arch of the right eyebrow would shoot up.

"I have discovered that an old friend of mine is at Carmel, Hal," explained Dr. Condon, "whom I am very anxious to see. So I am

going to take a machine over now. I won't be back for luncheon, but I'll meet you at dinner."

Mrs. Maxon and Hal said good-bye to each other.

They must get to Carmel now as quickly as possible. A sudden fear seized Mrs. Maxon. She wondered if Valerie Gray could stand the shock.

In a quarter of an hour she was knocking on Mrs. Gray's door, while Dr. Condon waited nearby in the hall.

There was no answer to her. Her heart turned sick and she put her hand to the knob and opened it. The bed was empty.

And then out of the dressing room came Valerie Gray in the mauve peignoir, looking immensely refreshed. She said she had slept well and had a beautiful dream.

Mrs. Maxon did not ask what the dream was, but she told her she had beautiful news for her.

"The miracle has happened," she said. "And I've met Dr. Condon."

Valerie Gray clutched the back of a chair and her frightened eyes grew wide.

"He begs you to forgive him," went on Mrs. Maxon quickly. "He is afraid you are angry with him because he has neglected you. He loves you," she added. Then, "And I have more news!"

"What else?" whispered the other woman.

"Your son—"

"Yes, yes?"

"Your son is alive. I have seen him. He is splendid."

A faint cry akin to a child's moan came from the Ibsen lady.

Her eyes closed—she swayed unsteadily and fell forward. Dr. Condon caught her before she reached the floor.

The following morning the baby and the mother met for the first time.

Then there was a silence in the studio. I realized that Mrs. Maxon had finished. I just sat there. "That's all there is to the Ibsen lady's story," she said. She reached into the hearth basket for some pine cones to add to the fire.

Your story was great, Mrs. Maxon," I said, slipping the dagger in and out of the sheath. "A most amazing family. I'd give much to see them. I—I wonder if they are all three really happy—or if there isn't a sort of haunting doubt that can't be shaken off. I wonder if their happiness will be lasting. I'd like to see them myself, to feel sure."

There were footsteps outside on the stone patio, and the hammered brass gong resounded. We both rose. Mrs. Maxon took the dagger from me and hid it under the piece of gold brocade on the table. "By the way," I said, "you haven't told me who were your other dinner guests tonight."

Mrs. Maxon smiled and there was a sort of triumphant twinkle in her eye. "I hope you find them interesting," she said. Then she opened the door.

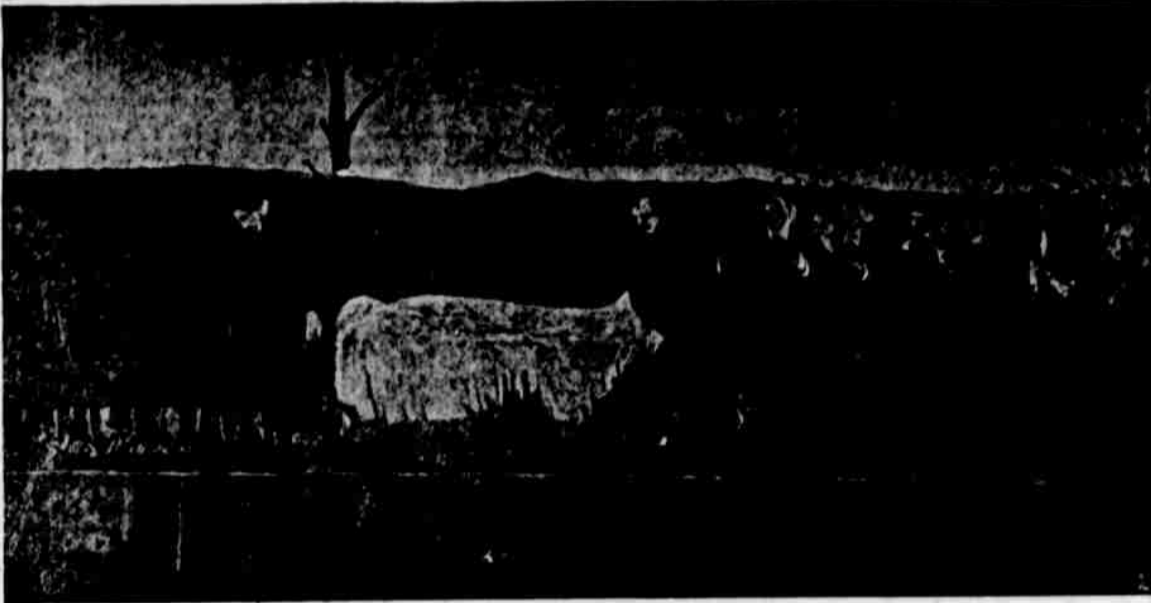
A woman and a man and a young man came in. I stared. My breath seemed to have left me.

In a moment my hand was touching that of the Ibsen lady. I looked into her face. There was no haunting doubt—only a beautiful happiness. I was presented to the men.

A China boy appeared and announced dinner.

The Ibsen lady and I went in together.

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Two hours later Armand was brought home dead.

Letters From Happyland Readers

(Continued From Page Five.)

you have promised to help someone every day and be kind to all animals and birds. So I thought if you liked the plan, I would make a chart for each of you, and every time you helped someone or were kind to some bird or animal you would put a mark down and at the end of each month the one that had the most marks would get a prize. I told mother about it and she said she would buy the prize.

All this while the girls were sitting on the steps wondering how "Betts" could think of such wonderful plans. At last one of the girls said: "Betts, do you know that this is the best plan you have ever thought of?"

"Yes," answered "Betts," "because it's helped to make the world a 'Happier Place.'"—Virginia Hunt, Aged 10, 2595 Kansas Ave., Omaha, Neb.

Jack's Dream.

It was on Sunday and Jack asked his daddy if he had gotten the Omaha Bee. His daddy asked his daddy if he had liked to read the children's page. His daddy told he did not get it, but he would after dinner. So after dinner he went and got it and brought it home.

Jack took the big chair and pulled it over by the fireplace and sat down and read about the Go-Hawks. He read them to his daddy after he had finished and asked him if he could join. His daddy said, "Certainly, you can send in the coupon today if you care to." That pleased Jack and he ran and got the scissors and cut out the coupon, put it in an envelope and ran to the corner mail box and dropped it in.

He was so glad he came running home and sat down thinking of when he would get his badge.

And while he was sitting there he fell fast asleep and this is his dream: He got his badge and wore it to school the first day. All the boys asked him questions about it. He answered them nicely, but if anyone laughed at him he told them that that badge would help some one. On the way home from school he saw some robins making a nest in a lilac bush; it was very low and a cat was trying hard to catch the birds and tear down the nest.

He called it away, but it would not go, so he went over and picked it up. It scratched him fiercely, but he did not stop for that; he petted it nicely so it finally stopped scratching. It was so pretty he thought he would take it home, so he did.

The next day one of the boys who had laughed at him asked him if it had done anyone any good.

Jack said, "Yes."

He asked, "Who?"

Jack told him some robins. He said, "I would have let a cat get

a robin and a nest if I had not looked at my badge and thought of the pledge, I promise to help some one every day. I will try and protect the birds and all dumb animals."

He then awoke to find his own pretty cat curled up in his lap asleep.—Gertrude E. Burgner, Age 12, 823 West Fourth Street, Grand Island, Neb.

A Sixth Grader.

Dear Happy: Enclosed find a 2-cent stamp to join the Go-Hawks. I read Happyland every Sunday. I like to read the stories. I am 11 years of age and in the sixth grade in school. I will try to help some one every day and try to protect all dumb animals. Well I must close as my letter is getting long.—Adorel Hendriksen; Ceresco, Neb.

Will Be Kind.

Dear Happy: I would like to join the Happy Tribe and I am enclosing a 2-cent stamp for which please send me a Go-Hawk pin. I promise to be kind to all dumb animals and try to help some one every day.—Anna Wochler, Aged 13, Wayne, Neb.

A Happy Reader.

This is my first letter to you. Whenever I read of the Happy Tribe it makes me think it has a nice name to match it, for when I read it makes me happy. For pets I have a little gray kitten; her name is Topsy. I have one sister. Well, goodby.—Mary Johnson, Stanton, Neb.

Wants Letters.

Dear Happy: I was very sorry last time I wrote. I did not see my letter in print. I thank you for the button. We had a program at School District No. 3. I hope this year Santa Claus brings us a Christmas tree, candy and nuts and visits Happyland. My teacher's name is Miss Katrine Carlsters. Tell some of the Go-Hawks to write to me.—Wilbert Jacobs, Avoca, Ia.

A Pair of Swimmers.

Dear Happy: My brother and I would like to join your Happy tribe, so will send 2-cent stamps for two badges. We have a pony. His name is Dickie. We have a reservoir and go swimming every day. My brother is 8 and I am 10. My letter is getting long, so will close. Yours truly, Lester and Frankie Mort, Venanga, Neb.

Wants to Join.

Dear Happy: I would like to join your Happy Tribe. I have been reading your stories every Sunday. I am sending you a 2-cent stamp for which I would like to have a pin. Well I will close for this time.—Orval Shaw; Central City, Neb.

The Girl Who Knew Her Own Robin.

It seems unreasonable that a misunderstanding about a pair of robins could divide a district school into two camps and upset the happiness of an otherwise serene family, but that is exactly what Janelda's robin met one spring time by a late arrival at the old nesting place.

It came about like this: When Janelda's father, who was a farmer, made a cement basement under the old farm house the year he put in the furnace, Janelda begged him to make a bird bath while there was an abundance of cement at hand. Accordingly one of the workmen drove a post into the ground opposite the kitchen window where Janelda hoped to wash dishes. On the post he nailed a shallow box which he lined with cement in a way to make the sort of bird bath that birds like best. It is true that Janelda hoped to be the family dish washer, because she was a girl who longed to be as useful as her older brother, Austin, who boasted that he began keeping the kitchen wood box filled when he was only 4 years old.

The bird bath proved to be a great comfort to all wild birds and a joyful hindrance in the kitchen. By the time Janelda was tall enough to take her place at the dish pan a certain pair of robins had for three years built a nest on a broad ledge under the roof of the back porch, so near the bird bath that water for making mud plaster for there nest was most convenient, and bathing facilities and drinking water were the finest in all the robin country. Every day Janelda swept the bird bath clean and filled it with fresh water and every day birds of various sizes splashed in it while Janelda paddled in soap suds dish water.—Alberta Blankenship.

A Swimmer.

Dear Happy: This is my second letter to you. I went swimming Sunday. I was trying to learn to swim, but I could not. I had a good time, some places was up to my father's neck. I think I will try to answer the riddle. Why should we always spell the word bank with a big "B"? Because it is a sign of money.—Lawrence Phalin; O'Neill, Neb.

Will Keep Pledge.

Dear Happy: I would like to join your tribe. I am sending a stamp, for which please send me a button. We take the Omaha Bee. I read the Happyland page and like it very well. I am in the fourth grade. I am 9 and have one sister, Lucy, and she is 10. I promise to help some one every day. I will try to protect the birds and all dumb animals.—Ruby Elliott, age 9, Angora, Neb.

The Monkey and the Cats.

Two hungry cats, having stolen some cheese, could not agree between themselves how to divide it, therefore they went to law and a cunning monkey was asked to be judge and settle their dispute.

The monkey put two pieces of cheese into some scales to see if they were of equal weight. "Let me see," said the judge with a sly look, "this slice weighs more than the other," and with that he bit off a large piece.

"Why do you bite our cheese," asked the cats.

"Because," said the judge, "I must see that neither one of you gets more than her share."

The other scale now had become too heavy so the honest judge helped himself to a second mouthful. Thus he nibbled first one piece and then the other 'till the poor cats seeing their cheese in a fair way to be all eaten up, most humbly begged him not to put himself to any further trouble, but

to give them what still remained.

"Not by any means," said the monkey. "I owe justice to myself as well as to you and what remains is due to me as the lawyer. Then he crammed the whole into his mouth at once and very gravely broke up the court.—A. C. P.; South Omaha, Neb.

Wants Letters.

Dear Happy: I wish to join the Go-Hawks. I have enclosed a 2-cent stamp for my button. I will try to be good to all dumb animals. I have one sister. Her name is Mildred. I am 11 years of age and I am going to be in the eighth grade. My teacher's name is Miss Lapcheska. I like her fine. Some of the Go-Hawks please write to me. I will gladly answer. As my letter is getting long I will close.—Ethel Wernke, Ohio, Neb.

Eating earth is common among uncivilized people.

Dot Puzzle



Can you finish this picture?

Complete the picture by drawing a line through the dots, beginning with one and taking them numerically.