

OUR MODEST JOURNAL LACKS A NAME. . . . Initially we thought we would print under the head, World Journal Tribune. Much to our chagrin, the local copy_{right} office slammed the door --metaphorically, that is-- on the idea. The Boro of Manhattan Community College -- United Federation of College Teachers Newsletter and Journal has a nice ring to it but it is a mite too long. Anyway, we do not know how to spell "boro," so scratch that. An office wrg suggested that we dub our paper, Modest Journal, but then we are not that modest. Possibly, by wit of collective effort, we can resolve the dilemma at our first chapter meeting.

VOL I, NO 1 United Federation of College Teachers - BMCC Chapter Oct 1966

Statement of Purpose

Newsletters usually make for dull reading. Rather than oppress you with still another form of institutional prose, we dress up our journal with stories, poems, reviews, essays, and satire. Timely accounts of pressing union issues will complement our literary offerings. We seek to create a viable intellectual dialogue between faculty members. Hopefully, our pages will bristle with dissent. If our journal is successful, it will generate controversy sufficient to necessitate a "letter's" column.

Ideally, humor will brighten our copy, countering tendencies toward pretentiousness on the one hand and harnessing despair on the other.

We welcome and will consider all contributions from union members and letters from the college community at large.

NEWS

NEW OFFICERS

On June 15, 1966, at the final meeting for the academic year 1965-1966, the chapter elected new officers. They are:

William P. Friedheim -- Chairman
Roger Dooley -- Vice Chairman
Anna Porter -- Secretary

Their terms of office extend through June of 1967.

CHAPTER MEETING

The chapter has scheduled its first meeting for Friday, October 7 at One O'Clock in Room 217. The tentative agenda reads as follows:

1. A discussion of action necessitated by the hesitancy of the administration to compensate those due pay and/or vacation as a result of the transition to the semester system.
2. A discussion of regulations governing multiple positions.

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3. The election of a permanent grievance committee.
4. The election of delegates to the Executive Committee of the New York local.
5. The selection of a name for the union journal.
6. The selection of an editor for the journal.
7. Discussion of a membership drive.
8. Other business.

ISSUES

COMPENSATION DUE FACULTY

The administration has not moved with dispatch to compensate faculty members due money or vacation time as a result of the transition to the semester system. On September 19, the first day of classes, the union directed a communication to the President requesting substantive information of the administration's intentions to resolve the matter. The President replied on Monday, October 3. He explained that the press of administrative duties had delayed his answer and prevented his office from examining the problem more thoroughly. He relayed the information that the administration was now pursuing the issue in greater detail.

At the first faculty meeting on Wednesday, September 28, the President spoke to the problem euphemistically. Rather than compensation, he promised vacation time which is due the faculty as a matter of course. Academic courtesy dictates that where possible the administration should spare the faculty of extra duties during intersession. Relief from a day of registration or a departmental meeting is not compensation for a month to two months of vacation. President Block's presentation flew in the face of the facts when he stated that most faculty members were not called back to the college before the start of classes on September 19. On September 6, the day after labor day, many faculty members returned to proctor placement examinations. Three proctors and one student aide administered the examinations in each room. In many rooms there were only thirty students. To say the least, the use of faculty labor approached extravagance. Members of the English Department spent up to a week, in addition, grading the tests. They came back along with their colleagues from other departments a few days later to help with registration.

On top of this, the President sought to rationalize away the problem of compensation by insisting that vacations under the semester calendar are more extensive than those under the quarter system. True enough but the logic of the statement is not persuasive. Longer vacations follow from longer hours. Under the semester system, faculty members teach up to fifteen hours a week, not ten as was the case under the quarter plan. Vacations ordinarily due under the semester system by no means replace those owed --but never enjoyed-- under the quarter calendar.

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COMPENSATION DUE FACULTY (continued)

Finally the President fell back upon the old administrative ploy of "the report!" He told us that his office would issue a report comprehensively charting the time owed each faculty member. On May 19, 1966, the Dean of Faculty released a chart which efficiently detailed compensation due every member of the faculty as a result of the changeover to the semester mode of operation. The chart was so complete that it covered every conceivable contingency. It was the end product of a committee charged to study the problem. Now the President wishes to appoint another committee and release yet another report.

As the chief administrator of a growing college, President Block is caught up in a maze of duties. He cannot oversee all administrative activities directly. It is understandable if he was unaware of the chart circulated by the Dean or the chores assigned faculty before the start of classes. President Block has always impressed us as a man who is both reasonable and politic. As a result, we find it difficult to comprehend his stand on this issue. Reluctantly we find it necessary that the union take up the problem. It will be the first order of business at our meeting on Friday.

THE FACULTY COUNCIL

The welcome establishment of a Faculty Council by no means preempts the ground of the union. A Faculty Council does not operate in a vacuum. Nor does democracy. The body politic of the Faculty Council must be nourished with ideas from a variety of sources. The union among others must stand vigilance over its affairs.

Undeniably the Council bears the mark of President Block's sincerity; a sincerity manifest by the fulfillment of a promise to provide the faculty a participating voice in the determination of college policy. The term, "Faculty Council," however, is somewhat of a misnomer. The Council represents administration as well as faculty. Seven officers of the college and thirteen departmental chairmen, who owe their status to administrative appointment, automatically sit on the Council.

Given its autonomy from the administration, the union can act as a sounding board for the faculty by refining issues for presentation to the Council. On occasion, the union may even take exception to the Council's decisions. Democracy, after all, is not fashioned out of a dulling of mediocre consensus, but rather civilized and reasoned dissent.

THE NUMBERS GAME

Without sufficient numbers, the Union, or any other faculty association for that matter, cannot set in motion qualitative programs. Too often, prospective members fall victim to circular reasoning. They conclude that without sufficient membership, union activity will mire in a nihilistic bog. By failing

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THE NUMBERS GAME (continued)

to join, although sympathetic to the aims of the union, they create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Some of the union's strategies miscarry precisely because sympathizers stop short of membership.

As the new academic year begins, the union roll lists forty-five names. Considering that the Chapter never proselytized aggressively in the past, as it will this year, the number looms large. Last year the union effected the opening of observation reports. In the coming months, buoyed by steady growth, the UFCT can mark the way to a still more comprehensive and democratic vision of Universitas at BwCC.

Hold back no more! Join the UFCT now!

COMMENT

THE UNION: ITS PLACE AT BwCC

by William Friedheim

Genteel, middle-class biases often lead educators into the error that unions are ill-fitted to an academic environment. The word "union" conjures up scenes of unruly workers massed against management and conspiring through strikes, pickets, slowdowns, and even violence to force the machinery of industry to a halt. The image, although apocryphal, gives pause to the college teacher. His reluctance to sew the union label into his white collar is, of course, not a phenomenon restricted to educational circles. White collar workers generally, prodded by a traditionally anti-union press, are quick to tar the labor movement with a proletarian brush and identify with their administrative superiors. Their posture toward unions calcifies with a contempt bred of an obsession with status.

The Union in the Face of Overwhelming Bureaucracy

Increasingly, however, unions are entering the once off-limits domain of the white-collar worker. Confronted by mammoth and ubiquitous bureaucracies, professionals find themselves enmeshed in red tape and estranged from those who shape institutional decisions. Genuine communication between employer and employee --or, in our case, between faculty and administration-- bends before impersonal and administrative machinery. Bureaucracy becomes an end unto itself, particularly when decisions are rationalized in the name of its own efficiency. The greatest danger of bureaucracy is a totalitarianism, not of human direction, but of mechanistic oppression. At its monolithic worst, bureaucracy dehumanizes administrator and administered alike.

There is no bogey man here. The blame for the ills of bureaucracy are not easily assigned nor should they be. The urgent question is: how does one in

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THE UNION: ITS PLACE AT BMCC (continued)

the face of an overwhelming bureaucracy transcend his alienation and assert his humanity. Increasing numbers of white collar workers have turned to labor unions for an answer.

A labor union such as the UFCT pulls as a counterweight against the centralizing tendencies of bureaucracy. It draws the white-collar worker into decisions which vitally affect him. Disaffection gives way to involvement. No longer bandied about as the passive pawn of impersonal corporate processes, the professional integrates more meaningfully with his work.

Unions are, of course, not immune to the cancer of bureaucracy. The amorphous administrative apparatus of labor often rivals that of management. Alert to the dangers of a top-heavy administration, the UFCT has sought to preserve the autonomy of its local units by building into its structure protections against centralized control. At BMCC, our chapter is master of its own house.

The Union as a Force for Democracy and Humanism

Specifically, the task before the union is contoured by two words: democracy and humanism. In concert with administration and students, the UFCT must press with humanistic zeal to democratize the college structure. In little less than a year President Block has moved the school in this direction with dedication and dispatch. We begin the semester with a newly constituted faculty council and a promise, originally tendered by the President to the union and now founded in official college policy, to open all observation reports. By example of its own conduct and by assiduously suggesting progressive --albeit unconventional-- programs, the UFCT can help translate the rhetoric of enlightened administration into a sanguine reality.

Neutralizing Pedantry and Pettiness

If the union's vision is myopic, restricted to wage and fringe benefits for its members (as vital as they are), its approach to the challenges of higher education will harden into self-interest and mediocrity. The union must do battle within and without its ranks against pedantry and pettiness. When educators demand additional pay for teaching a make-up class necessitated by a transit strike, they demean their status as professionals with unbecoming smallness. As dedicated teachers, the least they owe their students during a period of crisis is an extra hour of their time without compensation. (An extra month or more cannot be dismissed so gratuitously) Conversely, when treatment smacking of condescension or mistrust weighs heavily on the morale of any member of the college community, it is a matter which merits more than a submissive mutter, a matter which buks large and most definitely falls within the purview of a professional association of the UFCT. Administrators who seem to tyrannize those under them with a barrage of memoranda usually do so unwittingly and armed with the best of intentions. Frequently, words are misconstrued. By focussing on problems of communication --problems which beset any large institution where necessity mothers bureaucracy-- the union helps to open a free flowing and mature dialogue which can only lend dignity to faculty and administration.

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THE UNION: ITS PLACE AT BMCC (continued)

Exercising Leverage Outside the Establishment

The union and the administration are not naturally polarized at opposite ends of the academic spectrum. In the sometimes cynical but nonetheless necessary realm of politics, for example, the union can add needed leverage to attempts on the part of the college and the Board of Higher Education to marshal government monies and public opinion behind enlightened programs. While the union does not necessarily move in high administrative circles, it is in a position where it can touch some of the more sympathetic nerve ends of public sensitivity to issues. It can expose to publicity a decaying, overtaxed physical plant such as Franklin Hall, a converted factory which blighted a temporary campus of New York Community College in Brooklyn. A woefully meager budget had dictated continued use of the building. Obviously, no administrator was comfortable with a facility so lacking in functional and aesthetic amenities. Neither was the college's faculty. In this case, the vagaries of public budgeting had saddled the college's administration with an unwanted and inadequate structure and, together with established protocol, blocked effective action on its part to remedy the situation. The union, unfettered by any necessary deference to the city fathers who feed the college its funds, mobilized an effective publicity campaign to replace Franklin Hall. Its very position outside the establishment enabled the union to wage the good and successful fight for faculty, administration, and students.

The Paranoid Style of BMCC Politics

The union exhausts its usefulness only when its members revel in their own alienation and seek solace in martyrdom. At one point last year, communication between faculty and administration broke down with tragic results. Both sides spun conspiracy theories, usually unsubstantiated, about the other. The whole nasty affair left a bitter after-taste. If faculty and administration are to avert similar crises, lines of communication must at all cost remain open. At New York Community College, President Block left behind him a record of good relations with the UFCT, a record that stands as a model of cooperation between union and administration. The late President Dworkis before him, served the UFCT in many capacities, including as Vice President of the New York City Local. If history is a reliable gauge, the union and the administration can and should pursue common humanistic and democratic goals in the true spirit of ecumenicism.

CONTRIBUTORS

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POETRY

TWO POEMS

by Charlotte Croman

(Note: Maxwell Bodenheim was a celebrated American poet of the 20th Century who was murdered in Greenwich Village in 1954.)

THE PASSING OF MAXWELL BODENHEIM vs HIS OWN

CONCEPT OF DEATH

I.

I wonder is he now a silver bird
In the black curls of death ?
I wonder did he feel Death's kisses
And hear Death's voice speak softly ?
A poet he was, or so they said;
A prince, the papers wrote:
Born 1892 of woman,
Died 1954 of man.

II.

A thin, bent, weary, old man,
Ashen and incoherent,
Not the lyrics of the gods;
Obscene, harsh, bitter sounds only
Now came from this once darling.
His heritage was Israel,
His genius was words,
His pleasure was woman,
And his destruction was wine.
The goat man played him
A song to Dionysus
And a dirge for Achilles dead,
Rather his wings of wax
Soared too near the sun.

III.

Is he now a silver bird ?
How much of a longing
Did Death's heart have ?
Was it raining,
The air cool and sweet ?

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Or a shabby, furnished room
With light bulb on grimy chain?
A shelter from the night -- Ah! . . .
A woman's eyes widened,
Her mouth formed a scream,
Her drunken mate, frightened,
Impotently frantic --
The black wings of the madman
Bore down with fury
And the dark slave appeared:
Dagger and bullet found their quarry.

AFTERNOON IN APRIL

A splash of light made gold of his hair
Another deepened the blue of his eyes
A bleeding plaid of color shone at the turn
of his shoulder
As his hand grasped the door jamb;
She saw the double lines of his lean prairie cheek
And heard the soft temperate sound of his voice
As he asked: "Is there any chance . . .?"

She sat stiffly upright in the old brown chair
Amid the gloom and pall of the late afternoon;
The shadow disembodied the sagging line of her head
As it turned swiftly toward the wall
As if to utter a sound
The fine lines of her mouth parted --
A heavy silence, then a closing of the door.

CINEMA

THE WORLD OF WALT DISNEY

by Roger Dooley

Fantastic Voyage

In dramatizing science fiction, the visual possibilities of the screen, apparent even to the earliest movie-makers, still remain unparalleled. With all the resources of trick photography enhanced by color and Cinemascope, backed by expert technical advice, Twentieth Century -- Fox has come up with one of the most diverting examples in years of this genre, the aptly (if not very intriguingly) named Fantastic Voyage. As in all good science fiction, once a single premise is granted, everything else is completely realistic and convincing to the tiniest detail. In this case the necessary hypothesis is that human beings

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and their equipment could be reduced, intact, to microscopic size and injected by a hypodermic into the bloodstream of a living man. The victim is a scientist, himself an expert in "miniaturization," about to defect to the West when seriously injured by the other side -- so seriously that unless a blood clot can be cleared from his brain, he will die, taking his secret with him. Just to make the stakes more hazardous, miniaturization lasts exactly one hour, so the chosen team of five in their atomic-powered submarine must reach the brain, destroy the clot by laser beam, and make their exit within those sixty minutes.

Needless to say, every conceivable unforeseen obstacle arises, from a rapids-shooting crisis through the temporarily stopped heart to a catastrophic noise that occurs in the middle ear, to hostile anti-bodies and menacing white corpuscles. Photographed with startling special effects (never the least unpleasant or repellent, the squeamish may rest assured), this would be splendid cinematic entertainment with any cast, but it boasts such stalwart performers as Edmund O'Brien and Arthur O'Connell among those tracking the voyage by radar, and Arthur Kennedy, Stephen Boyd, and Donald Pleasance on the team within. With commendable restraint, the producers refrained from using I've Got You Under My Skin as theme music or even trying to arrange a tie-in with Inside Daisy Clover.

The Fighting Prince of Donegal

Besides the now only occasional cartoons, the nature studies, and the family type farces (usually starring Fred MacMurray or Hayley Mills), Walt Disney has for some years been producing, perhaps as a means of thawing funds frozen in England, a less publicized series of costume romances. The trademarks are a script based on some minor British classic now in public domain (e.g. When Knighthood Was in Flower), authentic castles and countryside photographed in lush color, frequent but not bloody swordplay, and a cast of those sterling character actors always available in England.

Having by now used all the more obvious material of British history, from Robin Hood to Jacobite risings, the Disney craftsmen have now turned their attention to the Anglo-Irish-Spanish situation as of 1587 -- certainly not an over-used background. But if the milieu is not familiar, the story line certainly is. Here instead of Richard Todd as Rob Roy we have young Peter McEnery as Red Hugh, "The O'Donnell," hereditary leader of a turbulent Irish clan just as ready to battle the O'Neills or the MacSweeneys as their traditional external enemies. Possibly to avoid offending English audiences, the real villain is a sneering captain of the guard who, in the viceroy's absence, acts on his own in clear opposition to the presumably benevolent Irish policy of Queen Elizabeth I.

Purists may also object that except for being kidnapped and imprisoned in Dublin Castle the events bear little resemblance to the life of the historic Hugh O'Donnell -- but most audiences will find-- themselves pleasantly entertained, perhaps the more so because every twist of the plot is so delightfully predictable. The able cast makes the dialogue sound much fresher than it is, especially McEnery, who lends his routine role a sensitivity and depth that suggest another Albert Finney or Peter O'Toole.

STORIES

THE DAUGHTERS

BY Jesse Pavis

The children lay on the grass and looked through the wire fence at the ducks floating on the pond. The water was so dark that they could not see the ducks' paddles and they imagined that someone was pulling them along by a string. The two girls leaned forward with their arms about each other and their heads were so close together that their hair fell in one mass. Maria was crying and her older sister Anna was whispering to her. Sometimes Anna would point to a duck but Maria would not turn her head.

"They're very pretty," Anna said. "Better than either of us or even Papa ever draws. Even pictures in a book are not like they are." Then she turned and looked at Maria. "Why are you crying? I don't cry . . ."

"Sometimes you do . . ."

"Only at night when I'm in bed and hear Papa walking around the house. Then I have to pull the covers over me so he and mother won't hear me. After a while I stop and try to think of some way to please Papa."

"Why isn't he like us?" Maria asked her sister.

"Sometimes he comes home and I can hear him singing when he comes up the steps. Then he sits in the big chair in the parlor and asks us to come and kiss him. But all this week and all last week, for such a long time, he doesn't talk at all."

"Mama says he's tired."

"But why wasn't he tired before?" Maria continued. "I ask him something and he answers without looking at me and so low I can't hear what he's saying. I try it again and then I stop. I don't want to hear him talk like that."

"But he's not angry."

"I know but I just don't understand him."

"I've told you already, Maria. He works too hard and too long. Every morning he has to get up and work and every night he has to go to sleep after dinner so he can work the next day. That's all he ever does. So he's tired."

"Mama was telling him to find another job and he told her he was lucky to get this one. She said he was going to wear himself out. And he said, 'Well, everybody has to live.' I asked Mama if he could ever get an easier job and she just shook her head and then she shivered."

After Maria finished speaking she laid her head on the grass and cried quietly to herself. Anna sat up. An old man was walking toward them. She looked around. Other people were sitting on benches near the pond and cars were driving slowly along the twisted lane. Anyway, the old man could hardly walk. He held a heavy stick in his two hands, and placing it before him, pulled himself forward. Anna told her sister to look up as the man came up to them. He sat down on the grass by the children and placed the stick across his knees. He had long grey hair which was swept back over his ears. He wore a red plaid shirt and blue overalls. He looked kindly at the children and spoke to them.

"I was watching you and an old man like me sees things that most people don't notice. I don't like to see such young girls like you

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THE DAUGHTERS (continued)

unhappy. So I've come over here to ask you what's the matter." When he had finished he hummed a song the children didn't know and watched them look at each other.

"Who are you?" Maria asked.

"Well, I'm the duck keeper. I make sure that there's enough food in the water. I take care of the sick ones. You didn't know there were any sick ducks? See that one?" he said, pointing toward a brown duck. "I had him in my house for a whole week. All the children around here thought he was going to die.. But in a way, ducks are like people. Watch."

He leaned his face against the fence and called the duck. It turned around and paddled toward him. "He likes you!" Anna said. The duck keeper was pleased and rested back on the grass.

"You're worrying about your parents," he said.

"It's Papa," Maria answered, shaking her head.

"It's probably not so bad as you make it," he told her. "When you're young everything seems bigger than it really is."

"Papa's not happy. He never does anything he wants to do. And it's been getting like that more and more. When he comes home he just sits in the parlor chair, looking at the light fixture or out of the window and not noticing anybody."

"A lot of people are like that," the duck keeper said.

"But we don't want him like that," Maria interrupted. "If he were just like us, lying here watching the ducks through fence..."

"He used to come to the park," Anna said. "But then he acted like he was sleeping. We'd call him and he wouldn't hear us. His eyes were open but he wasn't looking at anything. If we tickled him enough, he'd play rough with us for a while but soon he would just lie down again. Then, even if we crawled over and jumped on his back, it wouldn't make him play. So we'd just comb his hair or go off and play by ourselves."

"Then he's just too old," the duck keeper said.

"If he were as little as you..." the duck keeper continued.

"Just like us," Anna said. "Then we could all crouch on our hands and feet and chase each other around and shake our mouths like bad dogs. Then we could all watch the ducks. And if we got thirsty, we could all go to the fountain and take turns holding the faucet for each other."

"And you'd really like that?" the duck keeper asked. "It would have to be all the time...even at home...even around your mother. Would she like that?" he stopped and looked at the children. "She'd have to know..."

"What do you mean?" Anna laughed.

"You think I'm playing," he said gently. "If you want your papa as young as you are, not only here in the park, but at home too, even at dinner, I can make him young for you."

"Then he wouldn't have to work anymore?" Maria asked.

"Even if you could do it, how would we live? Somebody has to earn money..." Anna said.

"Someone else would feed you all right," the duck tender answered Anna. Then he stood up and leaned against his stick. "If you really want your father young, you bring him here this Sunday, tomorrow. But don't tell anyone. You decide." Then he placed the stick in front of him, leaned on

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THE DAUGHTERS (continued)

it and walked away. He beckoned to the brown duck and it paddled beside him as he walked along the fence.

"We'll tell Papa tonight that he's got to come here with us tomorrow," Maria said. She held Anna's hand tightly and squeezed.

"What would Mama do, Maria, if he really makes Papa as little as we are?"

"Just take care of all of us...."

"But that would be too much work for her, Maria."

"It'd be easier than it is now with Papa so sad."

"She'd be too lonesome if Papa were a child. He still sits and talks with Mama sometimes, even now, or goes for a walk around the corner with her..."

"But she's always worrying about him and they never play and laugh together. If he were little, she could just take care of him and not worry so much."

"We'd better go home," Anna said, getting up and walking toward the gate. "Don't tell Mama about the duck keeper. He's really just playing, anyhow."

"Then why can't we tell her?"

"I don't know if she'd like it," Anna answered. Then she took her sister's hand and broke into a run down the street.

That night Maria asked Papa to go to the park with them tomorrow. Anna tried not to watch when Maria crawled into his lap and whispered that they had a big surprise for him. Papa asked Mama what she knew about the surprise. Maria tried to put her hands over his mouth but he held her down and tickled her. Of course, Mama knew nothing. She laughed though and answered, "Who knows what your children will do?"

Anna walked quickly into her room and pulled the door closed. She stood next to it and listened but no one was talking now. Perhaps she should really tell her mother, regardless of what the duck keeper said. But perhaps it would be better for Mama and Papa if he were a child. She didn't know what to do. She was afraid to tell her mother the secret, even if the duck keeper was fooling them.

"Anna, Anna," Mama called.

"I'm in my room getting something," Anna answered, quickly turning on the light.

She met her father in the hall; he was already going to bed and he touselled her hair as he passed. Then she went into the parlor with Mama. "What's really the matter with Papa?" she asked.

"He just had a bad day, Anna."

Maria was nodding her head. Anna sat down beside her mother and put her arms around her. In a moment they heard Papa raise his window.

That night Anna tried to persuade Maria not to go to the park.

"Why? Why?" Maria insisted.

"I'm just afraid," Anna answered, sitting on Maria's bed and watching the hall light spread under their door.

"Papa will know what to do," Maria said, a little amazed. "I'm sleepy now....."

Anna lay down in her own bed and tried to sleep. She saw her father large, then small. Now he was sitting in the parlor chair, drumming

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THE DAUGHTERS (continued)

his fingers on the arm; now he was playing jump rope with them and her mother was watching and clapping her hands.

Maria was already sleeping and the whole house was quiet. Anna thought she saw the duck keeper. He was standing in the water in the middle of the pond, pointing at her and laughing. All the ducks had twisted their bills and were laughing too.

The children and their father left for the park in the morning. He walked between them, holding their hands and they almost pulled him along. Maria reminded him that they had a surprise for him. He said, "Please tell me, please tell me," and then walked on silently.

When they entered the park the children were surprised not to find the duck keeper. They led their father to the place where they had met the old man and sat down in the grass. Their father lay on the grass and shut his eyes. The children drew close together near the fence, whispered to one another and then walked quickly away in different directions to look for the duck keeper.

Anna walked to the keeper's house but no one was home. She even looked through the windows to make sure. Maria looked behind every tree and at every bench. She met her sister coming from the keeper's house. "He might come later," Anna said, walking back to the duck pond. Maria didn't answer her. She kicked the grass as she walked and shook her head, wondering if Anna had really looked for him.

When they came back to the fence their father was gone. A young boy was standing with his back to them watching the ducks. They looked all around but they could not find their father. The boy turned to them. He wore long corduroy trousers and a white starched shirt. His hair was black and uncombed.

"I was waiting for you," he said a little impatiently, as if they had been away a long time.

Maria turned her back to him and moved away.

"Who are you?" Anna asked him.

"Abthy," he said. "You're supposed to take me home."

Maria turned around and came back to him. "What do we want with you?"

"Please, Maria," Anna interrupted her. "He's just playing with you."

"No, I'm not. I'm really supposed to go home with you." He picked up a handful of grass and laughed as he threw it over Anna's hair. "If you don't believe me, you can ask the duck keeper."

"Where is he?" Anna asked him, looking all around her.

"Right there, leaning over the fence. Don't you see him?"

Anna got up and followed Maria who was already running toward him. The duck keeper heard them coming and turned around. He leaned forward on his stick so as to talk with them. "Come close, come close," he called loudly.

"Why did you fool us?" Maria shouted at him.

He placed his finger on her lips and spoke softly to them. "The little boy is your father." Then he laughed and hobbled away.

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THE DAUGHTERS (continued)

Abthy had followed the girls. "Now you believe me," he said. He tripped Maria up and ran around Anna, punching her lightly on the shoulders and chest. "Catch me, catch me," he laughed.

"Papa, Papa!" Anna cried. But Abthy kept poking his fists at her. Maria rolled over in the grass and caught Abthy's legs in her arms and pulled him down. Anna ran away from them to look for the duck keeper. But he was gone. She knew that she was going to cry and she put her fingers in her mouth. Papa must be somewhere, she thought. She walked all around the duck pond, stopping to look behind every tree and bush, calling her father. She even walked back to the duck keeper's house and banged on the door with a stone she had found in the road. She climbed on the porch railing to look through the windows again. Then she walked slowly back to Abthy and Maria and stood behind a bench to watch them. They were quarrelling.

"I'm gonna tell Mama on you, Abthy."

"She's my Mama too," Abthy answered, hitting Maria again on the shoulder.

Anna began crying. She should have told her mother. The duck keeper had not been playing with them. She was wrong even to listen to what he said. She turned her back on Abthy and Maria and went out of the park.

Anna was still crying when she walked into her house. From the kitchen her mother called to her. Anna ran in and threw herself against her mother. Mama put her hands on her hair and stroked it. "Why are you crying, Anna?"

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry," she said quickly, crying more loudly now and trembling.

"Anna, Anna," her mother tried to comfort her. But Anna cried steadily, although her mother had picked her up and was kissing her and rocking her in her arms. "What has happened, my darling? What has happened? Where is Papa?"

But Anna would not answer. Outside she heard Abthy and Maria calling her as they came running down the street.