

1. The Tattoo (O' Henry)

Kid shot his neighbor at a gambling house and to avoid the trouble got on a passenger train and later sailed to Buenos Aires coast of South America.

An American consul in Buenos Aires Thacker met Kid and having looked at him carefully told him a story of a very rich family, who had lost their only son, and had been looking for him for many years.

Kid looked just their son, he was of the same age and spoke Spanish better than English. The Urique's boy had a tattoo of a flying eagle on his left hand. They made tattoo on Kid's hand and he had to take the place of their son and steal money from the Urique's house

A month later Kid came to the consulate in response to a message sent by Thacker. He looked a young Spanish caballero. His clothes were of the later fashion and a big diamond shone on his finger.

"Well?" said Thacker. "How are you getting on? It's time you began acting," said Thacker.

"What is the trouble? Can't you find where Don Urique keeps his money?"

"Oh, he is very rich," said Kid, admiring his diamond. "There is plenty of money in the house. I've seen it with my own eyes. But you are not going to get it," said Kid cheerfully. "And I shall tell you why. The first night I was at Don Urique's house in my bed room, my artificial mother came in and bent over me. "My boy," she said, "my boy." And down came a drop or two, it hits me on the nose. You see, I had very little to do with mothers in my life and I think that this old artificial mother of mine mustn't be disappointed. She will not stand it twice. That's why things are going to stand just as they are."

"I'll expose you today, you traitor," stammered Thacker.

Kid rose, without violence, took Thacker by the throat with a hand of steel. Then with his left hand, he drew out his revolver and showed it to a Consul. "There is one more reason," he said "why things have to stay as they are. The fellow I killed had an eagle tattooed on his left hand."

From the outside came the sound of wheels and the old-fashioned carriage of Don Urique stopped at the door of the consulate.

"Where are you, dear son?" cried Donna Urique.

"I am coming, mother," answered Kid.

2. «Angel Pavement» By J.B. Priestly

"Cut some off for George," said Mrs. Smeeth, "and I'll keep it hot for him. He's going to be late again. You're a bit late yourself tonight Dad."

"I know. We've had a funny day today," replied Mr. Smeeth, but for the time being he did not pursue the subject. He was busy carving, and though it was only cold mutton he was carving, he liked to give it all of his attention.

"Now, then, Edna," cried Mrs. Smeeth to her daughter, "don't sit there dreaming. Pass the potatoes and the **greens-careful**, they're hot. And the mint sauce. Oh, I forgot it. Run and get it, that's a good girl. All right, don't bother yourself. I can be there and back before you've got your wits together."

Mr. Smeeth looked up from his carving and eyed Edna severely. "Why didn't you go and get it when your mother told you. Letting her do everything".

His daughter pulled down her mouth and wriggled a little. "I'd have gone," she said in a whining¹ tone. "Didn't give me time, that's all."

Mr. Smeeth grunted impatiently. Edna annoyed him these days. He had been very fond of her when she was a child. She had a way of looking, of talking, all acquired fairly recently, that

¹ whining

irritated him. An outsider might have come to the conclusion that Edna looked like a slightly soiled and cheapened elf. She was between seventeen and eighteen, a smallish girl, thin about the neck and shoulders but with sturdy legs. She had a broad snub nose, a little round mouth that was nearly always open, and grayish-greenish-bluish eyes set rather wide apart. She had left school as soon as she could, and had wandered in and out of various jobs, the latest and steadiest of them being one as assistant in a big draper's Finsbury Park way. At home now, being neither child nor adult, neither dependant nor independent, she was at her worst: complaining, shrill and resentful, or sullen and tearful. She would not eat properly; she did not want to help her mother, to do a bit of washing-up, to tidy her room; and it was only when one of her silly little friends called, when she was going out, that she suddenly sprang into a vivid personal life of her own, became eager and vivacious. This contrast, as sharp as a sword, sometimes angered, sometimes saddened her father, who could not imagine how his home, for which he saw himself for ever planning and working, appeared in the eyes of fretful, secretive and ambitious adolescence. These changes in Edna annoyed and worried him far more than did Mrs. Smeeth, who only offence when she had a solid grievance, and turned a tolerant, sagely eminine eye on what she called Edna's

3.«May Day» by Scott Fitzgerald

A young man came to the hotel and asked the room clerk if Mr. Philip Dean was registered there, and if so, could he be connected with Mr. Dean's rooms. The young man was Mr. Gordon Sterret. Soon the connection was made, and Gordon was invited.

Philip Dean, dressed in blue silk pijamas, opened his door and the two young men greeted each other. Phil was surprised and glad to see Gordon. They were both about twenty-four, Yale university graduates.

Gordon was dressed in a well-cut, shabby² suit. He was small, slender, and darkly handsome. His eyes were framed with unusually long eyelashes and below with the blue semicircle that spoke of ill health. His face had an unnatural glow³ as if he had a low, incessant⁴ fever.

Dean was blond, ruddy⁵, and rugged⁶ under his thin pijamas. Everything about him radiated fitness and bodily comfort. He smiled frequently, showing large and prominent teeth.

"Going to take a shower," he cried enthusiastically. He went to the bathroom and Gordon regarded the room nervously. There was a big English travelling bag in the corner, some silk shirts, littered⁷ on the chairs, neckties and soft woolen socks.

Soon Dean appeared from the bathroom, polishing his body and put on fresh underwear, lit a cigarette and sat down by the open window.

"Sit down, Gordy," he suggested, "and tell me all about you.

Gordon sat on the bed; inert⁸ and spiritless. He looked helpless and pathetic.

"What's the matter?"

"I've gone to pieces⁹, Phil. I'm all in."

"I got back from France in February, went home for a month, and came down to New York to get a job with an export company, but they fired¹⁰ me yesterday. Doing exporting business is not

² Not new

³ shine

⁴ constant

⁵ Having healthy reddish colour

⁶ brutal

⁷ Upside-down

⁸ Inactive, slack

⁹ drained

¹⁰ dismiss

for me. I always intended to draw. I've got a talent, Phil. I can draw. What I need is to go to art school and start drawing. I want to illustrate magazines. There's a pile of money in it. I need some money to start. I want you to lend me three hundred dollars. Will you lend me?"

"I can't decide at once. That's a lot of money and it will be inconvenient for me. When you could pay it back?"

"As soon as I'll sell any of my drawings. Maybe in three months."

"You put me in an awkward the position. It's no easy thing for me to give you three hundred dollars. My income is not so big."

On hearing these words Gordon's head was splitting¹¹ and whirring¹², his mouth was dry and bitter.

Philip Dean took a five-dollar bill and tossed it over to Gordon, who folded it carefully and put it in his pocket. Before going out their eyes met and quite suddenly and definitely hated each other.

4.The Last Leaf (O . H e n r y)

In a small part of the City West of Washington Square, the streets have gone wild. They turn in different directions. They are broken into small pieces called "places." One street goes across itself one or two times. A painter once discovered something possible and valuable about this street. Suppose a painter had some painting materials for which he had not paid. Suppose he had no money. Suppose a man came to get the money. The man might walk down that street and suddenly meet himself coming back, without having received a cent!

This part of the city is called Greenwich Village. And to old Greenwich Village the painters soon came. Here they found rooms they like, with good light and at a low cost.

Sue and Johnsy lived at the top of a building with three floors. One of these young women came from Maine, the other from California. They had met at a restaurant on Eighth Street. There they discovered that they liked the same kind of art, the same kind of food, and the same kind of clothes. So they decided to live and work together.

That was in the spring. Toward winter a cold stranger entered Greenwich Village. No one could see him. He walked around touching one person here and another there with his icy fingers. He was a bad sickness. Doctors called him Pneumonia. On the east side of the city he hurried, touching many people; but in the narrow streets of Greenwich Village he did not move so quickly.

Mr. Pneumonia was not a nice old gentleman. A nice old gentleman would not hurt a weak little woman from California. But Mr. Pneumonia touched Johnsy with his cold fingers. She lay on her bed almost without moving, and she looked through the window at the wall of the house next to hers.

One morning the busy doctor spoke to Sue alone in the hall, where Johnsy could not hear. "She has a very small chance," he said. "She has a chance, if she wants to live. If people don't want to live, I can't do much for them. Your little lady has decided that she is not going to get well. Is there something that is troubling her?"

"She always wanted to go to Italy and paint a picture of the Bay of Naples," said Sue.

"Paint! Not paint. Is there anything worth being troubled about? A man?"

"A man?" said Sue. "Is a man worth—No, doctor. There is not a man."

¹¹ Smb's head is ready to burst

¹² Go round, to feel giddy

“It is weakness,” said the doctor. “I will do all I know how to do. But when a sick person begins to feel that he’s going to die, half my work is useless. Talk to her about new winter clothes. If she were interested in the future, her chances would be better.”

After the doctor had gone, Sue went into the workroom to cry.

Then she walked into Johnsy’s room. She carried some of her painting materials, and she was singing.

Johnsy lay there, very thin and very quiet. Her face was turned toward the window. Sue stopped singing, thinking that Johnsy was asleep.

Sue began to work. As she worked she heard a low sound, again and again. She went quickly to the bedside.

Johnsy’s eyes were open wide. She was looking out the window and counting—counting back.

“Twelve,” she said; and a little later, “Eleven”; and then, “Ten,” and, “Nine”; and then, “Eight,” and, “Seven,” almost together.

Sue looked out the window. What was there to count? There was only the side wall of the next house, a short distance away. The wall had no window. An old, old tree grew against the wall. The cold breath of winter had already touched it. Almost all its leaves had fallen from its dark branches.

“What is it, dear?” asked Sue.

“Six,” said Johnsy, in a voice still lower. “They’re falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It hurt my head to count them. But now it’s easy. There goes another one. There are only five now.”

“Five what, dear? Tell your Sue.”

“Leaves. On the tree. When the last one falls, I must go, too. I’ve known that for three days. Didn’t the doctor tell you?”

“Oh, I never heard of such a thing,” said Sue. “It doesn’t have any sense in it. What does an old tree have to do with you? Or with your getting well? And you used to love that tree so much. Don’t be a little fool. The doctor told me your chances for getting well. He told me this morning. He said you had very good chances! Try to eat a little now. And then I’ll go back to work. And then I can sell my picture, and then I can buy something more for you to eat to make you strong.”

“You don’t have to buy anything for me,” said Johnsy. She still looked out the window. “There goes another. No, I don’t want anything to eat. Now there are four. I want to see the last one fall before night. Then I’ll go, too.”

5. “Period Piece” by Joyce Cary

Tutin, married sixteen years, with three children, had an affair with his secretary, Phyllis, aged eighteen, and wanted a divorce. His wife, Clare, with her usual good sense, was resigned. ‘If you feel you must make a break,’ she said, sadly but without bitterness, ‘there’s no more to be said. It would be stupid to try to hold you against your will. You’d only hate me and that wouldn’t help either of us.’

But when her mother in remote Yorkshire heard of this arrangement, she wrote and said it was preposterous and wicked, she wouldn’t allow it. Old Mrs. Beer was the widow of a canon. She was a short, stout woman with a red face and a heavy jaw – a pugnacious and indomitable face. Yet there was something defeated about it too. The little faded blue eyes especially seemed to confess that the old woman had long given up hope of any serious attention from anybody.

You see such faces in boxing booths among the seconds and backers, men who have been in the ring all their lives and lost all their fight, but still follow the games as bottle holders, training partners, punching bags for young champions.

Her son-in-law laughed at her when she didn't exasperate him to madness by her sudden raids and arbitrary commands. Each time a child was born she planted herself in the household and took charge of every detail – laying down the law in an intolerable manner and flatly contradicting everybody from the doctor to the monthly nurse.

Now, at this talk of divorce, she excelled herself. When Clare wrote her explanations she came south without any warning whatever broke into Tutin's office and, marching up to his desk, umbrella in hand as if about to beat him, demanded, 'What's this nonsense about a divorce?'

6. Three Men in a Boat

Jerome Klapka Jerome

There were four of us - George, and William Samuel Harris, and myself, and Montmorency. We were sitting in my room, smoking, and talking about how bad we were - bad from a medical point of view I mean, of course.

We were all feeling seedy, and we were getting quite nervous about it. Harris said he felt such extraordinary fits of giddiness come over him at times, that he hardly knew what he was doing; and then George said that he had fits of giddiness too, and hardly knew what he was doing. With me, it was my liver that was out of order. I knew it was my liver that was out of order, because I had just been reading a patent liver-pill circular, in which were detailed the various symptoms by which a man could tell when his liver was out of order. I had them all.

It is a most extraordinary thing, but I never read a patient medicine advertisement without being impelled to the conclusion that I am suffering from the particular disease there in dealt with in its most virulent form. The diagnosis seems in every case to correspond exactly with all the sensations that I have ever felt.

I remember going to the British Museum one day to read up the treatment for some slight ailment of which I had a touch - hay fever, I fancy it was. I got down the book, and read all I came to read; and then, in an unthinking moment, I idly turned the leaves, and began to indolently study diseases, generally. I forget which was the first distemper I plunged into - some fearful, devastating scourge, I know - and, before I had glanced half down the list of "premonitory symptoms," it was borne in upon me that I had fairly got it.

I sat for awhile, frozen with horror; and then, in the listlessness of despair, I again turned over the pages.

I had walked into that reading-room a happy, healthy man. I crawled out a decrepit wreck.

7.«Cakes and Ale» by Somerset Maugham

I do not know what wonderful strategy she (Mrs. Barton Trafford) employed, what miracles¹³ of tact, what tenderness, what sympathy. I can only suppose and admire; she nobbled Jasper Gibbons. In a little while he was eating out of her soft hand. She was admirable. She had him to

¹³ Supernatural event

lunch; to meet the right people; she gave At Homes¹⁴ where he recited his poems before the most distinguished persons in England; she introduced him to eminent¹⁵ actors who gave him commissions¹⁶ to write plays; she saw that his poems should only appear in the proper places; she dealt with the publishers and made contracts for him; she took care that he should accept only the invitations of which she approved. She even went so far as to separate him from the wife with whom he had lived happily for ten years, since she felt that a poet to be true to himself and his art must not be domestically tied. When the crash came Mrs. Barton Trafford said that she had done everything for him.

There came a crash¹⁷. Jasper Gibbons brought out another volume of poetry; it was neither better nor worse than the first; it was very much like the first; it was treated with respect, but the critics made reservations; some of them even carped¹⁸. The book was a disappointment. It's sale also. And unfortunately Jasper Gibbons was inclined to drink. Perhaps he missed his homely, common little wife. Once or twice he came to dinner at Mrs. Barton Trafford's. She told her guest gently that the bard¹⁹ was not quite himself that evening. His third book was a failure. The critics tore him limb from limb, they knocked him down and stamped on him. Then Jasper Gibbons was arrested for being drunk and disorderly in Piccadilly and Mr. Barton Trafford had to go to Vine Street at midnight to bail him out.

Mrs. Barton Trafford was perfect at that moment. She did not complain. No harsh²⁰ word came from her lips. She remained tender, gentle, and sympathetic. She was the woman who understood. She dropped him, but not like a hot brick, or a hot potato. She dropped him with infinite gentleness. She dropped him with so much tact, with such sensibility²¹, that Jasper Gibbons perhaps hardly knew he was dropped. But there was no doubt about it. She would say nothing against him, indeed she would not discuss him at all, and when mention was made of him she merely smiled, a little sadly, and sighed.

8. For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway
Chapter 26, pp. 302-3 (1940)

It was three o'clock in the afternoon before the planes came. The snow had all been gone by noon and rocks were hot now in the sun. There were no clouds in the sky and Robert Jordan sat in the rocks with his shirt off browning his back in the sun and reading the letters that had been in the pockets of the dead cavalryman. From time to time he would stop reading to look across the open slope to the line of the timber, look over the high country above and then return to the letters. No more cavalry had appeared. At intervals there would be the sound of a shot from the direction of El Sordo's camp. But the firing was desultory.

From examining his military papers he knew the boy was from Tafalla in Navarra, twenty-one years old, unmarried, and the son of a blacksmith. His regiment was the Nth cavalry, which surprised Robert Jordan, for he had believed that regiment to be in the North. He was a Carlist, and he had been wounded at the fighting for Irun at the start of the war.

The first letters he read were very formal, very carefully written and dealt almost entirely with local happenings. They were from his sister and Robert Jordan learned that everything was all right in Tafalla, that father was well, that mother was the same as always but with certain complaints about her back, that she hoped he was well and not in too great danger and she was

¹⁴ parties

¹⁵ famous

¹⁶ orders

¹⁷ failure

¹⁸ criticize

¹⁹ poet

²⁰ rude

²¹ feeling

happy he was doing away with the reds to liberate Spain from the domination of the Marxist hordes. Then there was a list of those boys from Tafalla who had been killed or badly wounded since she wrote last. She mentioned ten who were killed. That is a great many for a town the size of Tafalla, Robert Jordan thought.

There was quite a lot of religion in the letter and she prayed to Saint Anthony, to the Blessed Virgin of Pilar, and to other Virgins to protect him and she wanted him never to forget that he was also protected by the Sacred Heart of Jesus that he wore still, she trusted, at all times over his own heart where it had been proven innumerable—this was underlined—times to have the power of stopping bullets. She was as always his loving sister Concha.

This letter was a little stained around the edges and Robert Jordan put it carefully back with the military papers and opened a letter with a less severe handwriting. It was from the boy's *novicia* his fiancée, and it was quietly, formally, and completely hysterical with concern for his safety. Robert Jordan read it through and then put all the letters together with the papers into his hip pocket. He did not want to read the other letters. I guess I've done my good deed for today, he said to himself. I guess you have all right, he repeated.

"What are those you were reading?" Primitivo asked him.

"The documentation and the letters of that requete we shot this morning. Do you want to see it?"

"I can't read," Primitivo said. "Was there anything interesting?"

9. The Little Match Girl by Hans Christian Andersen

*Although he is well noted for his fairy-tales, the poignant story of **The Little Match Girl** or **The Little Matchstick Girl** is a great example of Hans Christian Andersen's broad literary talent and ability. I personally like to read this story at least twice a year, once in Autumn as the holiday season comes into focus, and then again around the Christmas holiday. It's a gentle reminder of the value of compassion and charity.*

Most terribly cold it was; it snowed, and was nearly quite dark, and evening-- the last evening of the year. In this cold and darkness there went along the street a poor little girl, bareheaded, and with naked feet. When she left home she had slippers on, it is true; but what was the good of that? They were very large slippers, which her mother had hitherto worn; so large were they; and the poor little thing lost them as she scuffled away across the street, because of two carriages that rolled by dreadfully fast.

One slipper was nowhere to be found; the other had been laid hold of by an urchin, and off he ran with it; he thought it would do capitally for a cradle when he some day or other should have children himself. So the little maiden walked on with her tiny naked feet, that were quite red and blue from cold. She carried a quantity of matches in an old apron, and she held a bundle of them in her hand. Nobody had bought anything of her the whole livelong day; no one had given her a single farthing.

She crept along trembling with cold and hunger--a very picture of sorrow, the poor little thing! The flakes of snow covered her long fair hair, which fell in beautiful curls around her neck; but of that, of course, she never once now thought. From all the windows the candles were gleaming, and it smelt so deliciously of roast goose, for you know it was New Year's Eve; yes, of that she thought.

In a corner formed by two houses, of which one advanced more than the other, she seated herself down and cowered together. Her little feet she had drawn close up to her, but she grew colder and colder, and to go home she did not venture, for she had not sold any matches and could not bring a farthing of money: from her father she would certainly get blows, and at home it was cold too, for above her she had only the roof, through which the wind whistled, even

10. The excerpt from "The Gift of the Magi" by O. Henry

Jim drew a package from his overcoat pocket and threw it upon the table.

"Don't make any mistake, Dell," he said, "about me. I don't think there's anything in the way of a haircut or a shave or a shampoo that could make me like my girl any less. But if you'll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going a while at first."

White fingers and nimble tore at the string and paper. And then an ecstatic scream of joy; and then, alas! a quick feminine change to hysterical tears and wails, necessitating the immediate employment of all the comforting powers of the lord of the flat.

For there lay The Combs - the set of combs, side and back, that Della had worshipped for long in a Broadway window. Beautiful combs, pure tortoise-shell, with jeweled rims--just the shade to wear in the beautiful vanished hair. They were expensive combs, she knew, and her heart had simply craved and yearned over them without the least hope of possession. And now, they were hers, but the tresses that should have adorned the coveted adornments were gone.

But she hugged them to her bosom, and at length she was able to look up with dim eyes and a smile and say: "My hair grows so fast, Jim!"

And then Della leaped up like a little singed cat and cried, "Oh, oh!"

Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present. She held it out to him eagerly upon her open palm. The dull precious metal seemed to flash with a reflection of her bright and ardent spirit.

"Isn't it a dandy, Jim? I hunted all over town to find it. You'll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. Give me your watch. I want to see how it looks on it."

Instead of obeying, Jim tumbled down on the couch and put his hands under the back of his head and smiled.

"Dell," said he, "let's put our Christmas presents away and keep 'em a while. They're too nice to use just at present. I sold the watch to get the money to buy your combs. And now suppose you put the chops on."

The magi, as you know, were wise men--wonderfully wise men--who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest. Everywhere they are wisest. They are the magi.

11. The Car by Andrew Rossiter

"It's a really good bargain," said the man in the showroom ; and as far as Shafi could tell, he was telling the truth.

"It's yours for just £5,000!" he continued. "You won't find a better buy anywhere else in the North; and what's more, we'll give you a year's insurance with it. Free!"

Shafi eyed the vehicle longingly; it was bright red, and just over a year old - and inside it had that smell of polish that comes with a new car. There was just the matter of the price - it was more than he had planned to spend on his first car, and more than he actually had available.

"Five thousand?" he asked, hoping rather hopelessly that he had somehow misheard.

"Five grand! That's it. But you can 'ave it for three in cash now, and the rest in three months. You can get a loan from the bank!"

Ever since he'd taken his first job at the burger bar at the age of 17, he'd been saving up for a nice car; of course, he could have made do with a cheap wreck years ago - but that was not what he wanted. Shafi wanted a good car, a nice car, one that would make him feel as if he had achieved something better in life than serving in a restaurant.

He handed over the crisp fifty pound notes. Even if the insurance was only third-party, he reckoned it was a good buy at the price.

Settling in to the driving seat, he adjusted it for position, and turned the key. Within minutes, he had passed the outskirts of Leeds, and was headed for Gemma's house in Frampton. After all, she'd been badgering him to get a car, ever since he'd first mentioned the idea to her a month or so earlier

He knew that she'd be impressed.

"So you bought it at last!" she exclaimed. "Great!" Now we can go places!"

"Yes. And it goes like a dream!"

"Let's take it over to Sawby tonight," she suggested. "Jess is on the door, he'll let us in free."

"Good idea."

Sawby was only sixteen miles away, but the quickest way to get there was to take the motorway ; and besides Shafi was keen to see how fast he could get the new car up to.

"Hey, take it easy," said Gemma, as the speedometer edged up towards the 100 m.p.h. mark. "You don't want to get done for speeding on the very first day!"

Shafi slowed down; the exit for Sawby was coming up fast.

As luck would have it, there was a space just opposite the club as Shafi proudly arrived in the shining new car. A group of young men watched from the pavement opposite as he carefully parked by the kerbside.

12.«Fresh from the country»

By Miss Reed

Anna Lacey is a young teacher, who meets her class for the first time and tries to get her firm standing by recalling different recommendations she's got at college.

Anna watched her class file in a ragged two – by – two columns through the doorway of her classroom. Miss Enerby, large and imposing, a professionally bright smile curving her mouth, stood beside her and gave a few directions.

“Choose any desks, dears. Yes, you may sit by Bobby if you can behave yourself, Arnold. No I don't want to see birthday cards now, dear. Nor dinner money. Nor your tortoise's egg. Put it on the window-sill, in the cool.” She clapped her hands with a sudden deafening noise, making Anna, and several of the children, start nervously.

“All behind chairs! Quickly now! I want to introduce you to your new teacher.” Miss Enderby inclined her well – corseted figure sideways towards Anna and whispered: “This may seem a little formal to you after the advice you had at college for free movement in the classroom and so on, but we must have a little order with these large numbers.” Anna nodded agreement. To her bewildered senses the scene presented chaos. Another thunderous clap from Miss Enderby brought some appreciable quietening of the uproar²².

“Right behind chairs!” boomed the headmistress. “And standing on two feet! That's better.” By now a hush had fallen upon the classroom. Outside Anna could hear the whirring of a cement – mixer. It sounded uncomfortably close at hand, and later that morning she realized that it was just below her windows and likely to keep up its merry din for the most of the term. The children fixed their eyes unwinkingly upon Anna. Anna gazed back warily , feeling helpless. “Now,

²² noise

children,” began Miss Enderby firmly, “you are very, very lucky this term to have Miss Lacey for your new teacher.” Anna gave a watery smile. The children’s faces were unmoved.

13.«DEAR GRETA GARBO» by William Saroyan

Dear Miss Garbo:

I hope you noticed me in the newsreel of the recent Detroit Riot²³ in which my head was broken. I never worked for Ford²⁴ but a friend of mine told me about the strike and as I had nothing to do that day I went over with him to the scene of the riot and we were standing around in small groups chewing the rag²⁵ about this and that and there was a lot of radical talk, but I didn't pay any attention to it.

I didn't think anything was going to happen but when I saw the newsreel automobiles drive up, I figured²⁶, well, here's a chance for me to get into the movies like I always wanted to, so I stuck around²⁷ waiting for my chance. I always knew I had the sort of face that would film well and look good on the screen and I was greatly pleased with my performance, although the little accident kept me in the hospital a week.

Just as soon as I got out, though, I went around to a little theatre in my neighborhood where I found out they were showing the newsreel in which I played a part, and I went into the theatre to see myself on the screen. It sure looked great, and if you noticed the newsreel carefully you couldn't have missed me because I am the young man in the blue-serge suit whose hat fell off when the running began. Remember? I turned around on purpose three or four times to have my face filmed and I guess you saw me smile. I wanted to see how my smile looked in the moving pictures and even if I do say so I think it looked pretty good.

My name is Felix Otria and I come from Italian people. I am a high-school graduate and speak the language like a native as well as Italian. I look a little like Rudolph Valentino and Ronald Colman, and I sure would like to hear that Cecil B. DeMille or one of those other big shots noticed me and saw what good material I am for the movies. The part of the riot that I missed because they knocked me out I saw in the newsreel and I mean to say it must have got to be a regular affair, what with the water hoses²⁸ and the tear-gas bombs, and the rest of it. But I saw the newsreel eleven times in three days, and I can safely say no other man, civilian or police, stood out from the crowd the way I did, and I wonder if you will take this matter up with the company you work for and see if they won't send for me and give; me a trial²⁹. I know I'll make good and I'll thank you to my dying day, Miss Garbo. I have a strong voice, and I can play the part of a lover very nicely, so I hope you will do me a little favor. Who knows, maybe someday in the near future I will be playing the hero in a picture with you.

Yours very truly, Felix Otria.

14.“Village school” By Laurie Lee

Miss B, the Head Teacher, to whom I was now delivered, being about as physically soothing as a rake. The school had christened Miss B Crabby, she had a sour yellow look, lank

²³ uprising

²⁴ An American automobile company

²⁵ To joke

²⁶ imagine

²⁷ walk

²⁸ tubes

²⁹ test

hair coiled in earphones, and the skin and voice of a turkey. We were all afraid of gobbling Miss B, she spied, she pried, she crouched, she crept, she pounced³⁰ – she was a terror.

Each morning was war without declaration. We stood to attention, half-crippled in our desks, till Miss B walked in, whacked the walls with a ruler, and fixed us with her squinting eye.

“Good a-morning, children!”

“Good morning, Teacher!” The greeting was like a rattling of swords. Then she would scowl at the floor and begin to growl “Ar Farther...” at which we said the Lord’s Prayer, praised all good things, and thanked God for the health of our King. But scarcely had we bellowed the last Amen than Crabby coiled, uncoiled, and sprang, and knocked some poor boy sideways.

One seldom knew why; one was always off guard, for the punishment preceded the charge. The charge, however, followed hard upon it, to a light shower of angry spitting.

“Shuffling your feet! Playing with the desk! A-smirking at that miserable Betty! I will not have it. I’ll not, I say. I repeat – I will not have it!”

Many a punch-drunk boy in a playground battle, outnumbered and beaten to his knees, would be heard to cry: “I will not have it! I’ll not, I say! I repeat- I will not have it!” It was an appeal to the code of our common suffering, and called for immediate mercy.

So we did not much approve of Crabby – though she was responsible for our excellent reflexes. Apart from this, her teaching was not memorable. She appears in my recollection as merely a militant figure, a hunched-up little creature all spring-coils and slaps – not a monster by any means, but a natural manifestation of what we expected of school.

For school in my day, that day, Crabby’s day, seemed to be designed simply to keep us out of the air and from following the normal pursuits of the fields. Crabby’s science of dates and sums and writing seemed a typical invention of her own, a sour form of fiddling or prison-labor like picking oakum or sewing sacks.

15.«The Force of Circumstances» by W. S. Maugham

The extract under evaluation is taken from the South Sea’s story and describes the happy life of the young couple in the far-away district. The happy life is over. When a native woman with a baby appears by the young couple’s bungalow. As the husband confesses the woman who stands by their bungalow is the one from whom the three boys were born. The wife has made up her mind to abandon her husband and ask him to let her go.

“Guy, I have something I want to say to you,” she murmured.

His heart gave a sudden beat against his ribs and he felt himself change colour.

“Oh, my dear, don’t look like that, it’s not so very terrible,” she laughed.

But he thought her voice trembled a little.

“Well?”

“I want you to do something for me.”

“My darling, I’ll do anything in the world for you.”

He put out his hand to take hers, but she drew it away.

“I want you to let me go home.”

“You?” he cried, terrified. “When? Why?”

“I’ve borne it as long as I can. I’m at the end of my tether.”³¹

“How long do you want to go for? For always?”

“I don’t know .I think so.” She gathered determination. “Yes, for always.”

“Oh, my God!”

His voice broke and she thought he was going to cry.

“Oh, Guy, don’t blame me. It really is not my fault. I can’t help myself.”

³⁰ attack

³¹ Restraint: rope

“You asked me for six months. I accepted your terms. You can’t say I’ve made a nuisance of myself.”

“No, no.”

“I’ve tried not to let you see what a rotten time I was having.”

“ I know. I’m very grateful to you. You’ve been awfully kind to me. Listen, Guy, I want to tell you again that I don’t blame you for a single thing you did. After all, you were only a boy, and you did no more than the others; I know what the loneliness is here. Oh, my dear, I’m so dreadfully sorry for you. I knew all that from the beginning. That’s why I asked you for six months. My commonsense tells me that I’m making a mountain out of a mole-hill. I’m unreasonable; I’m being unfair to you. But, you see commonsense has nothing to do with it; my whole soul is in revolt.³² When I see the woman and her children in the village I just feel my legs shaking. You don’t know what I’ve suffered.”

“I think I’ve persuaded her to go away. And I’ve applied for a transfer

16. “Village School” by Laurie Lee

So I was dragged to that Room, where I’d never been before, and under the savage eyes of the elder children teacher gave me a scalding lecture. I was confused by now and shaking with guilt. At last I smirked and ran out of the room. I had learnt my first lesson, that I could not hit Vera, no matter how fuzzy her hair. And something else too, that the summons to the Big Room, the policeman’s hand on the shoulder, comes almost always as a complete surprise, and for the crime that one has forgotten.

My brother Jack, who was with me in the Infants, was too clever to stay there long. Indeed he was so bright he made us uncomfortable, and we were all of us glad to get rid of him. Sitting pale in his pinafore, gravely studying, commanding the teacher to bring him fresh books, or to sharpen his pencils, or to make less noise, he was an Infant Freak³³ from the start. So he was promoted to the Big Room given a desk and a dozen atlases to sit on, from which he continued to bully³⁴ the teachers in that cold clear voice of his.

But I, myself, was a natural Infant, content to serve out my time, to slop around and whine and idle. So I remained long after bright Jack had moved on, the fat lord of my nursery life, skilled at cutting out men from paper, chalking suns on the walls, making snakes from clay, idling voluptuously through the milky days with a young teacher to feed on. But my time was slowly running out; my Big Room bumps were growing. Suddenly, almost to my dismay, I found that I could count up to a hundred, could write my name in both large and small letters, and subtract certain numbers from each other. I had even just succeeded in subtracting Poppy from Jo, when the call came down from on high. Infant no longer, I was being moved up – the Big Rom was ready for me.

17. « *The Great Gatsby* » by F. Scott Fitzgerald

In June she married Tom Buchanan of Chicago, with more pomp and circumstance than Louisville ever knew before. He came down with a hundred people in four private cars, and hired a whole floor of the Muhlbach Hotel, and the day before the wedding he gave her a string of pearls valued at three hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

³² Protest

³³ fan

³⁴ torture

I was a bridesmaid. I came into her room half an hour before the bridal dinner, and found her lying on her bed as lovely as the June night in her flowered dress—and as drunk as a monkey. She had a bottle of Sauterne in one hand and a letter in the other.

"Gratulate me," she muttered. "Never had a drink before, but oh how I do enjoy it."

"What's the matter, Daisy?"

I was scared, I can tell you; I'd never seen a girl like that before.

"Here, dears'." She groped around in a waste-basket she had with her on the bed and pulled out the string of pearls. "take 'em downstairs and give 'em back to whoever they belong to. Tell 'em all Daisy's change' her mine. Say: 'Daisy's change' her mine!"

She began to cry—she cried and cried. I rushed out and found her mother's maid, and we locked the door and got her into a cold bath. She wouldn't let go of the letter. She took it into the tub with her and squeezed it up into a wet ball, and only let me leave it in the soapdish when she saw that it was coming to pieces like snow.

But she didn't say another word. We gave her spirits of ammonia and put ice on her forehead and hooked her back into her dress, and half an hour later, when we walked out of the room, the pearls were around her neck and the incident was over. Next day at five o'clock she married Tom Buchanan without so much as a shiver, and started off on a three months' trip to the South Seas.

I saw them in Santa Barbara when they came back, and I thought I'd never seen a girl so mad about her husband. If he left the room for a minute she'd look around uneasily, and say: "Where's Tom gone?" and wear the most abstracted expression until she saw him coming in the door. She used to sit on the sand with his head in her lap by the hour, rubbing her fingers over his eyes and looking at him with unfathomable delight. It was touching to see them together—it made you laugh in a hushed, fascinated way. That was in August. A week after I left Santa Barbara Tom ran into a wagon on the Ventura road one night, and ripped a front wheel off his car. The girl who was with him got into the papers, too, because her arm was broken—she was one of the chambermaids in the Santa Barbara Hotel. The next April Daisy had her little girl, and they went to France for a year.

18. The Happy Man by W.S. Maugham

I was a young man and I lived in a modest apartment in London near Victoria Station. Late one afternoon, when I was beginning to think that I had worked enough for that day, I heard a ring at the bell. I opened the door to a total stranger. He asked me my name and asked if he might come in.

"Certainly". I led him into my sitting room and begged to sit down. He seemed a trifle embarrassed. I offered him a cigarette and he had some difficulty in lighting it.

"I hope you don't mind my coming to see you like this", he said, "My name is Stephens and I am a doctor. You're in the medical, I believe?"

"Yes, but I don't practise".

"No, I know. I've just read a book of yours about Spain and I wanted to ask you about it".

"It's not a very good book, I'm afraid".

"The fact remains that you know something about Spain and there's no one else I know who does. And I thought perhaps you wouldn't mind giving me some information".

"I shall be very glad".

"I hope you won't think it very odd for a perfect stranger to talk to you like this". He gave an apologetic laugh. "I'm not going to tell you the story of my life".

"I was brought up by two old aunts. I've never been anywhere. I've never done anything. I've been married for six years. I have no children. I'm a medical officer at the Camberwell Infirmary. I can't bear it anymore".

There was something very striking in the short, sharp sentences he used. I looked at him with curiosity. He was a little man, thickset and stout, of thirty perhaps, with a round red face from which shone small, dark and very bright eyes. His black hair was cropped close to a bullet-shaped head. He was dressed in a blue suit a good deal the worse for wear. It was baggy at the knees and the pockets bulged untidily.

“You know what the duties are of a medical officer in an infirmary. One day is pretty much like another. And that's all I've got to look forward to for the rest of my life. Do you think it's worth it?”

“It's a means of livelihood”, I answered.

“Yes, I know. The money's pretty good”.

“I don't exactly know why you've come to me”.

“Well, I wanted to know whether you thought there would be any chance for an English doctor in Spain?”

“Why Spain?”

“I don't know, I just have a fancy for it”.

“It's not like Carmen, you know”, I smiled.

“But there's sunshine there, and there's good wine, and there's colour, and there's air you can breathe. Let me say what I have to say straight out. I heard by accident that there was no English doctor in Seville. Do you think I could earn a living there? Is it madness to give up a good safe job for an uncertainty?”

“What does your wife think about it?”

“She's willing”.

“It's a great risk”.

“I know. But if you say take it, I will: if you say stay where you are, I'll stay”.

“Your whole future is concerned: you must decide for yourself. But this I can tell you: if you don't want money but are content to earn just enough to keep body and soul together, then go. For you will lead a wonderful life”.

He left me, I thought about him for a day or two, and then forgot. The episode passed completely. Many years later, fifteen at least, I happened to be in Seville and having some trifling indisposition asked the hotel porter whether there was an English doctor in the town. He said there was and gave me the address. I took a cab and as I drove up to the house, a little fat man came out of it. He hesitated, when he caught sight of me.

“Have you come to see me?” he said. “I'm the English doctor”.

“There's no fee”.

“Why on earth not?”

“Don't you remember me? Why, I'm here because of something you said to me. You changed my whole life for me. I'm Stephens”. I was wondering if I'd ever see you again”, he said, “I was wondering if ever I'd have a chance of thanking you for all you've done for me”.

“It's been a success then?”

“Surely you were married?” I said.

“Yes. My wife didn't like Spain, she went back to Camberwell, she was more at home there”.

“Oh, I'm sorry for that”.

His black eyes flashed a smile.

“Life is full of compensations”, he murmured.

As he stood at the door to let me out he said to me:

“You told me when last I saw you that if I came here I should earn just enough money to keep body and soul together, but that I should lead a wonderful life. Well, I want to tell you that you

were right. Poor I have been and poor I shall always be, but by heaven, I have enjoyed myself. I wouldn't exchange the life I've had with that of any king in the world".

19.Fragment from THE LUMBER-ROOM

By H. Munro

First and foremost there was a piece of framed tapestry that was evidently meant to be a fire-screen. To Nicholas it was a living breathing story; he sat down on a roll of Indian hangings, glowing in wonderful colour beneath a layer of dust and took in all the details of the tapestry picture. A man, dressed in the hunting costume of some remote period, had just transfixed a stag with an arrow, it could not have been a difficult shot because the stag was only one or two paces away from him; in the thickly growing vegetation that the picture suggested it would not have been difficult to creep up to a feeding stag, and the two spotted dogs that were springing forward to join in the chase had evidently been trained to keep to heel till the arrow was discharged. That part of the picture was simple, if interesting, but did the huntsman see, what Nicholas saw, that four galloping wolves were coming in his direction through the wood? There might be more than four of them hidden behind the trees, and in any case would the man and his dogs be able to cope with four wolves if they made an attack? The man had only two arrows left in his quiver, and he might miss with one or both of them; all one knew about his skill in shooting was that he could hit a large stag at a ridiculously short range. Nicholas sat for many golden minutes revolving the possibilities of the scene; he was inclined to think that there were more than four wolves and that the man and his dogs were in a tight corner.

But there were other objects of delight and interest claiming his instant attention: there were quaint twisted candlesticks in the shape of snakes, and a teapot fashioned like a china duck, out of whose open beak the tea was supposed to come. How dull and shapeless the nursery teapot seemed in comparison! Less promising in appearance was a large square book with plain black covers; Nicholas peeped into it, and, behold, it was full of coloured pictures of birds. And such birds! A wholes portrait gallery of undreamed-of creatures. And as he was admiring the colouring of the mandarin duck and assigning a life-history to it, the voice of his aunt came from the gooseberry garden without. She had grown suspicious at his long disappearance, and had leapt to the conclusion that he had climbed over the wall behind the sheltering screen of lilac bushes; she was now engaged in energetic and rather hopeless search for him among the artichokes and raspberry canes.

"Nicholas, Nicholas!" she screamed, "you are to come out of this at once. It's no use trying to hide there; I can see you all the time."

It was probably the first time for twenty years that anyone had smiled in that lumber-room.

20.By Aldous Huxley

A.Huxley (1894-1963) is a famous English short story writer and novelist. The coming fragment depicts an episode from the Claxtons' life.

The year was 1924, late April. Through the open window of the drawing-room came the sound of Sylvia's practicing the piano. Stubbornly, with a determined fury, she was trying to master Chopin's waltz. Again and again she played, again and again.

At the bottom of the garden the birds went about their business. On the trees the new small leaves were like little flames at the tip of every twig.

Herbert was sitting on the tree stump doing the yoga breathing exercises which he found good for his health. Near him, on a camp stool, Paul was drawing an oak tree. Art at all costs, beautiful, uplifting Art. Paul was bored. Rotten old tree(st). What was the point of drawing it? .He would rather buy some chocolate or go to the cinema, or perhaps buy some cigarettes, though it might be dangerous.

"Well, Paul,"-said his father- "how are you getting on?" He got up from the tree stump and walked to where his son was sitting.

The time had altered Herbert very little. His explosive beard remained as blond as it had always been. He was thin as ever. His head showed no signs of getting bald³⁵. Only his teeth had visibly aged. His smile was discolored and broken.

“How are you getting on?”-Herbert repeated and laid his hand on the boy’s shoulder.”The bark of the oak tree is most horribly difficult to draw.”-Paul answered in a complaining angry voice. “Patience and work are the only things that get any work right”-said Herbert. But these words seemed to Paul stupid and insulting. Herbert went on.”Genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains.”At that moment Paul detested his father.

Herbert had gone to his studio and his unfinished picture of “Europe and America at the feet of Mother India”.

Paul pulled a catapult out of his pocket and shot a nuthatch that was running like a mouse up to the oak tree.”Hell,” said Paul as the bird flew away unharmed. But his next shot was fortunate. time he had ever killed anything. What a good shot! But there was nobody he could talk to about it. With fallen branch he dug a small hole and buried a little corpse. How people would be furious if they knew!

21.Sister Carrie, by Theodore Dreiser

They were nearing Chicago. Signs were everywhere numerous. Trains flashed by them. Far away were indications of suburban towns, some big smokestacks towering high in the air. Frequently there were two-story frame houses standing out in the open fields, without fence or trees, lone outposts of the approaching army of homes.

To the child, the genius with imagination, or the wholly untravelled, the approach to a great city for the first time is a wonderful thing. The streets, the lamps, the lighted chamber set for dining, are for me. The theatre, the halls, the parties, the ways of rest and the paths of song — these are mine in the night.” Though all humanity be still enclosed in the shops, the thrill runs abroad. It is in the air. The dullest feel something which they may not always express or describe. It is the lifting of the burden of toil.

Sister Carrie gazed out of the window. Her companion, affected by her wonder, so contagious are all things, felt anew some interest in the city and pointed out its marvels. “This is Northwest Chicago,” said Drouet. “This is the Chicago River,” and he pointed to a little muddy creek, crowded with the huge masted wanderers from far-off waters nosing the black-posted banks. With a puff, a clang, and a clatter of rails it was gone. “Chicago is getting to be a great town,” he went on. “It’s a wonder. You’ll find lots to see here.”

She did not hear this very well. Her heart was troubled by a kind of terror. The fact that she was alone, away from home, rushing into a great sea of life and endeavour, began to tell. She could not help but feel a little choked for breath — a little sick as her heart beat so fast. She half closed her eyes and tried to think it was nothing, that Columbia City was only a little way off.

“Chicago! Chicago!” called the brakeman, slamming open the door. They were rushing into a more crowded yard, alive with the clatter and clang of life. She began to gather up her poor little grip and closed her hand firmly upon her purse.

22.Sister Carrie Theodore Dreiser

When Caroline Meeber boarded the afternoon train for Chicago, her total outfit consisted of a small trunk, a cheap imitation alligator-skin satchel, a small lunch in a paper box, and a yellow leather snap purse, containing her ticket, a scrap of paper with her sister’s address in Van Buren Street, and four dollars in money. It was in August, 1889. She was eighteen years of age, bright, timid, and full of the illusions of ignorance and youth. Whatever touch of regret at parting characterised her thoughts, it was certainly not for advantages now being given up. A gush of tears at her mother’s farewell kiss, a touch in her throat when the cars clacked by the flour mill where her father worked by the day, a pathetic sigh as the familiar green environs of the village

³⁵ cries

passed in review, and the threads which bound her so lightly to girlhood and home were irretrievably broken.

To be sure there was always the next station, where one might descend and return. There was the great city, bound more closely by these very trains which came up daily. Columbia City was not so very far away, even once she was in Chicago. What, pray, is a few hours — a few hundred miles? She looked at the little slip bearing her sister's address and wondered. She gazed at the green landscape, now passing in swift review, until her swifter thoughts replaced its impression with vague conjectures of what Chicago might be.

When a girl leaves her home at eighteen, she does one of two things. Either she falls into saving hands and becomes better, or she rapidly assumes the cosmopolitan standard of virtue and becomes worse. Of an intermediate balance, under the circumstances, there is no possibility. The city has its cunning wiles, no less than the infinitely smaller and more human tempter. There are large forces which allure with all the soulfulness of expression possible in the most cultured human.

23. «*Fresh from the country*»

By Miss Reed

Anna Lacey is a young teacher, who meets her class for the first time and tries to get her firm standing by recalling different recommendations she's got at college.

Anna watched her class file in a ragged two – by – two columns through the doorway of her classroom. Miss Enderby, large and imposing, a professionally bright smile curving her mouth, stood beside her and gave a few directions.

“Choose any desks, dears. Yes, you may sit by Bobby if you can behave yourself, Arnold. No I don't want to see birthday cards now, dear. Nor dinner money. Nor your tortoise's egg. Put it on the window-sill, in the cool.” She clapped her hands with a sudden deafening noise, making Anna, and several of the children, start nervously.

“All behind chairs! Quickly now! I want to introduce you to your new teacher.” Miss Enderby inclined her well – corseted figure sideways towards Anna and whispered: “This may seem a little formal to you after the advice you had at college for free movement in the classroom and so on, but we must have a little order with these large numbers.” Anna nodded agreement. To her bewildered senses the scene presented chaos. Another thunderous clap³⁶ from Miss Enderby brought some appreciable quietening of the uproar.

“Right behind chairs!” boomed the headmistress. “And standing on two feet! That's better.” By now a hush³⁷ had fallen upon the classroom. Outside Anna could hear the whirring of a cement – mixer. It sounded uncomfortably close at hand, and later that morning she realized that it was just below her windows and likely to keep up its merry din³⁸ for the most of the term. The children fixed their eyes unwinkingly upon Anna. Anna gazed back warily³⁹, feeling helpless. “Now, children,” began Miss Enderby firmly, “you are very, very lucky this term to have Miss Lacey for your new teacher.” Anna gave a watery smile. The children's faces were unmoved. “Perhaps you could say ‘Good morning’ to your new teacher?” suggested Miss Enderby in an imperative tone. “Good morning Miss Lacey,” came the polite chorus. “Good morning, children,” responded Anna in a croak⁴⁰ which bore no resemblance to her normal voice. Anna began to wonder if she would ever get used to it or if she would be compelled to stuff cotton-wool in her ears before these mass upheavals⁴¹ and take it out when the class had settled. “I should give out paper and coloured pencils,” said Miss Enderby, “as soon as you've called the register. Keep them busy while you're finding your way about the cupboards and so on.”

³⁶ bang

³⁷ silence

³⁸ noise

³⁹ carefully

⁴⁰ hoarse

⁴¹ disorder

24. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice. At that time Macondo was a village of twenty adobe houses, built on the bank of a river of clear water that ran along a bed of polished stones, which were white and enormous, like prehistoric eggs. The world was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point. Every year during the month of March a family of ragged gypsies would set up their tents near the village, and with a great uproar of pipes and kettledrums they would display new inventions. First they brought the magnet. A heavy gypsy with an untamed beard and sparrow hands, who introduced himself as Melquiades, put on a bold public demonstration of what he himself called the eighth wonder of the learned alchemists of Macedonia. He went from house to house dragging two metal ingots and everybody was amazed to see pots, pans, tongs, and braziers tumble down from their places and beams creak from the desperation of nails and screws trying to emerge, and even objects that had been lost for a long time appeared from where they had been searched for most and went dragging along in turbulent confusion behind Melquiades' magical irons. "Things have a life of their own," the gypsy proclaimed with a harsh accent. "It's simply a matter of waking up their souls." Jose Arcadio Buendia, whose unbridled imagination always went beyond the genius of nature and even beyond miracles and magic, thought that it would be possible to make use of that useless invention to extract gold from the bowels of the earth. Melquiades, who was an honest man, warned him: "It won't work for that." But Jose Arcadio Buendia at that time did not believe in the honesty of gypsies, so he traded his mule and a pair of goats for the two magnetized ingots. Ursula Iguarán, his wife, who relied on those animals to increase their poor domestic holdings, was unable to dissuade him. "Very soon we'll have gold enough and more to pave the floors of the house," he husband replied. For several months he worked hard to demonstrate the truth of his idea. He explored every inch of the region, even the riverbed, dragging the two iron ingots along and reciting Melquiades' incantation aloud. The only thing he succeeded *in* doing was to unearth a suit of fifteenth-century armor which had all of its pieces soldered together with rust and inside of which there was the hollow resonance of enormous stone-filled gourd. When Jose Arcadio Buendia and the four men of his expedition managed to take the armor apart, they found inside a calcified skeleton with a copper locket containing a woman's hair around its neck. In March the gypsies returned. This time they brought a telescope and a magnifying glass the size of a drum, which they exhibited as the latest discovery of the Jews of Amsterdam. They placed a gypsy woman at one end of the village and set up the telescope at the entrance to the tent. For the price of five reales, people could look into the telescope and see the gypsy woman an arm's length away. "Science has eliminated distance," Melquiades proclaimed.

25. «*The Bees*» by Gerald Durrell

Gerald Durrell is a writer on travel and national history. He is remarkable for his witty and humorous stories on the relations between people and nature. He is the author of numerous books on travels and animal life.

I remember when I was a child being sent to visit one of our numerous elderly and eccentric aunts. She was mad about bees; the garden was full of hives, humming like telegraph poles. One afternoon she put on an enormous veil and a pair of gloves, locked us all in the cottage for safety, and went out to try to get some honey out of one of the hives. Apparently she didn't stupefy them properly, or whatever it is you do, and when she took the lid off, the bees poured out and settled on her. We were watching all this through the window. We didn't know

much about bees, so we thought this was all right, until we saw her flying round the garden making desperate attempts to avoid the bees, getting her veil tangled in the rosebushes. Eventually she reached the cottage and flung herself at the door. We couldn't open it because she had the key. We kept trying to tell her this, but her screams of agony and the humming of the bees drowned our voices. It was I believe, Leslie who had the brilliant idea of throwing a bucket of water over her from the bedroom window. Unfortunately in his enthusiasm he threw the bucket as well. To be drenched with cold water and then hit on the head with a large galvanized iron bucket is irritating enough, but to have to fight off mass of bees at the same time makes the whole thing extremely trying. When we eventually got her inside she was so swollen as to be almost unrecognizable.

26.A CONFUSED GENERATION

taken from National Geographic open-source Life Study Book

Change brings problems. Bella lives with her parents in a brand new apartment in Shanghai. Her real name is Zhou Jiaying – 'Bella' is the name that she has been given by her English teacher. Her parents are representative of a confused generation in a confused time. In modern Chinese society different ideologies are fighting against each other. Enormous material benefits have been brought by China's economic boom, but the debate is not about these; it's about family life and values. Old values – the respect of family and the older generations – are being replaced by new ones which place money as the critical measurement of one's position in society. But at the same time these new values are also being questioned. Have our lives been made richer by all our new possessions? Is Chinese culture being supplanted? As in all changing societies people are trying to find the right balance between the 'new' and 'old'.

Recently, Bella's family put their grandfather into a nursing home. It was a painful decision. In traditional China, caring for aged parents has always been an unavoidable duty, but times are changing. Bella's ambition? 'I want one day to put my parents in the best nursing home' – the best that money can buy, she means.

'When she told us that' Bella's father says, 'I thought – is it selfish to think she will be a dutiful and caring daughter and look after us? We don't want to be a burden on her when we get old. This is something my daughter has taught us. Once it was parents who taught children, but now we learn from them.' The family can buy many more things these days, and when they go shopping, Bella makes sure that the 'right' western brands are selected. (Pizza Hut is her favourite restaurant.)

She also teaches her parents the latest slang. Her parents want to be supportive, but they no longer help with Bella's homework; in spoken English she has surpassed them. She has already learnt much more about the world outside than them. 'Our advice is not listened to and it is not wanted,' her mother says. 'When she was little, she agreed with all my opinions. Now she sits there without saying anything, but I know she doesn't agree with me.' Bella glares, but says nothing. 'I suppose our child-raising has been a failure.' In China there is no concept of the rebellious teenager.

27. *The Little Match Girl* by Hans Christian Andersen

*Although he is well noted for his fairy-tales, the poignant story of **The Little Match Girl** or **The Little Matchstick Girl** is a great example of Hans Christian Andersen's broad literary talent and ability. I personally like to read this story at least twice a year, once in Autumn as the holiday season comes into focus, and then again around the Christmas holiday. It's a gentle reminder of the value of compassion and charity.*

Her little hands were almost numbed with cold. Oh! a match might afford her a world of comfort, if she only dared take a single one out of the bundle, draw it against the wall, and warm her fingers by it. She drew one out. "Rischt!" how it blazed, how it burnt! It was a warm, bright flame, like a candle, as she held her hands over it: it was a wonderful light. It seemed really to the little maiden as though she were sitting before a large iron stove, with burnished brass feet and a brass ornament at top. The fire burned with such blessed influence; it warmed so delightfully. The little girl had already stretched out her feet to warm them too; but--the small flame went out, the stove vanished: she had only the remains of the burnt-out match in her hand. She rubbed another against the wall: it burned brightly, and where the light fell on the wall, there the wall became transparent like a veil, so that she could see into the room. On the table was spread a snow-white tablecloth; upon it was a splendid porcelain service, and the roast goose was steaming famously with its stuffing of apple and dried plums. And what was still more capital to behold was, the goose hopped down from the dish, reeled about on the floor with knife and fork in its breast, till it came up to the poor little girl; when--the match went out and nothing but the thick, cold, damp wall was left behind. She lighted another match. Now there she was sitting under the most magnificent Christmas tree: it was still larger, and more decorated than the one which she had seen through the glass door in the rich merchant's house.

Thousands of lights were burning on the green branches, and gaily-colored pictures, such as she had seen in the shop-windows, looked down upon her. The little maiden stretched out her hands towards them when--the match went out. The lights of the Christmas tree rose higher and higher, she saw them now as stars in heaven; one fell down and formed a long trail of fire.

28. *The Gift of the Magi* by O. Henry

The "Dillingham" had been flung to the breeze during a former period of prosperity when its possessor was being paid \$30 per week. Now, when the income was shrunk to \$20, the letters of "Dillingham" looked blurred, as though they were thinking seriously of contracting to a modest and unassuming D. But whenever Mr. James Dillingham Young came home and reached his flat above he was called "Jim" and greatly hugged by Mrs. James Dillingham Young, already introduced to you as Della. Which is all very good.

So now Della's beautiful hair fell about her, rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters. It reached below her knee and made itself almost a garment for her. And then she did it up again nervously and quickly. Once she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet.

On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. With a whirl of skirts and with the brilliant sparkle still in her eyes, she cluttered out of the door and down the stairs to the street.

When Della reached home her intoxication gave way a little to prudence and reason. She got out her curling irons and lighted the gas and went to work repairing the ravages made by generosity added to love. Which is always a tremendous task dear friends--a mammoth task.

Within forty minutes her head was covered with tiny, close-lying curls that made her look wonderfully like a truant schoolboy. She looked at her reflection in the mirror long, carefully, and critically.

"If Jim doesn't kill me," she said to herself, "before he takes a second look at me, he'll say I look like a Coney Island chorus girl. But what could I do--oh! what could I do with a dollar and eighty-seven cents?"

The door opened and Jim stepped in and closed it. He looked thin and very serious. Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two--and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new overcoat and he was without gloves.

Jim stepped inside the door, as immovable as a setter at the scent of quail. His eyes were fixed upon Della, and there was an expression in them that she could not read, and it terrified her. It was not anger, nor surprise, nor disapproval, nor horror, nor any of the sentiments that she had been prepared for. He simply stared at her fixedly with that peculiar expression on his face.

29.WHO'S A CLEVER BIRD, THEN?

**Alice M. I. Auersperg,
Auguste M. P. von Bayern**

How does a scientist find out to what extent an animal is capable of thinking? What evidence is there that it is able to acquire information about the world and act on it, learning as it goes along?

In 1977 Irene Pepperberg, a recent graduate of Harvard University, decided to investigate the thought processes of another creature by talking to it. In order to do this she would teach a one-year-old African grey parrot named Alex to reproduce the sounds of the English language. 'I thought if he learnt to communicate, I could ask him questions about how he sees the world.'

Pepperberg bought Alex in a Chicago pet store. She let the store's assistant choose him because she didn't want other scientists to say that she had deliberately chosen an especially smart bird. Given that Alex's brain was the size of a walnut, most researchers thought Pepperberg's communication study would be futile. 'Some people actually called me crazy for trying this,' she said.

With Pepperberg's patient teaching, Alex learnt how to imitate almost one hundred English words, including the names of food. He could count to six and had learnt the sounds for seven and eight. But the point was not to see if Alex could learn words by heart. Pepperberg wanted to get inside his mind and learn more about a bird's understanding of the world. She couldn't ask him what he was thinking about, but she could ask him about his knowledge of numbers, shapes and colours.

In one demonstration, Pepperberg placed Alex on a wooden perch in the middle of the room. She then held up a green key and a small green cup for him to look at. 'What's the same?' she asked.

Without hesitation, Alex's beak opened: 'Co-lour.'

'What's different?' Pepperberg asked.

'Shape,' Alex said. His voice had the sound of a cartoon character. But the words – and what can only be called the thoughts – were entirely his. Many of Alex's cognitive skills, such as his ability to understand the concepts of 'same' and 'different', are rare in the animal world. Very few animals share these skills. But parrots, like humans, live a long time in complex societies. And like humans, these birds must keep track of the dynamics of changing relationships and environments.

30.«A Very Short Story» by Ernest Hemingway

One hot evening in Padua⁴² they carried him up onto the roof and he could look out over the top of the town. There were chimney⁴³ swifts in the sky. After a while it got dark and the search-light came out. The others went down and took the bottles with them. He and Luz could hear them below on the balcony. Luz sat on the bed. She was cool and fresh in the hot night.

Luz stayed on night duty for three months. She prepared him for the operating table; and they had a joke about friends or enemies. He went under the anesthetic⁴⁴ so he would not blab about anything during the silly, talky time. After he got on crutches he used to take temperatures so Luz would not have to get up from the bed. There were only a few patients, and they all liked Luz.

Before he went back to the front they went into the church and prayed. It was dim and quiet, and there were other people praying. They wanted to get married, but there was not enough time for the banns, and neither of them had birth certificates. They felt as though they were married, but they wanted everyone to know about it.

Luz wrote him many letters that he never got until after the armistice⁴⁵. They were all about the hospital, and how much she loved him and how it was impossible to get along without him and how terrible it was missing him at night.

After the armistice they agreed he should go home to get a job so they might be married. Luz would not come home until he had a good job and could come to New York to meet her. It was understood he would not drink, and he did not want to see his friends or anyone in the States. Only to get a job and be married. On the train from Padua to Milan they quarreled about her not being willing to come home at once. When they had to say good-bye, in the station at Milan, they kissed good-bye, but were not finished with the quarrel. He felt sick about saying good-bye like that.

⁴² An Italian town

⁴³ A smoke tube on the roof

⁴⁴ pain killer

⁴⁵ truce, cease-fire