

Life Begins At 62½

By George B. Russ

There was nothing sinister in the words that Will Deal had said, but there was something deadly in the intonation of each one; "you hobo your way over there and I'll pay your way back." And from where she stood, she didn't like the way his beady, black eyes were flashing like white lightning. So, without so much as a howdy-dooty, she made a bout face and made a bee-line for the front door of the store. Now the hand truck was following her.

"In the name of Jesus," she had never made a switch so fast. She could hear Bella cussing, but she could not see or hear Jeff. Turning a man down left Jeff Boykins was like turning down a feast on an empty stomach. And she didn't have to be told that he was rotten to the core, that, a woman with a grain of sense knew when she was being knocked for a loop, however, there was something fetishistic about males like Jeff; his type moved the way a woman wanted to be moved; "we meet and the angels sing;" Miss Madie told herself as she walked toward the market section of the junky building. She wanted to shake Will Deal the way one shakes the plague. Her reason for shaking "shorty-pants" had nothing to do with right or wrong; she just wanted to feel free to daydream, think about Jeff, surmise what it was he had wanted with her. If he wanted to make up, she would play hard to get up to a certain point, but not for too long. A man like Jeff didn't have to fiddle while an old rake like herself did a bit of soul-searching. "Nope," she was no silly-nilly middle aged woman suffering from the delusion of having rediscovered the fountain of youth. Her need at this time in her life was a gentleman friend with "gumption," good looks, cleanliness of body and mind, cheerful and self-supporting. Jeff was what the doctor ordered, with the exception of his fickleness. Holding fickleness against a man was asking for heartaches by the bunches. Men were born with roving eyes and a weakness for the opposite sex. That doesn't mean that his heart isn't in the right place. "Main woman" in his life; and, she had a feeling that all men have a done and only love in his life.

Will Deal had next to nothing to say to Miss Madie after the "Hog she had cut," and when she tried to live things up with repartee, he became sullen as a noonday thunder cloud. Naturally, she felt like a fool talking to someone who didn't have the "common decency" to do more than grunt, therefore, she clammed up "tighter than an ah-leech-on-ah-dog's belly."

By the time the van rolled across the county line and headed for Bayborough, she was worn out from holding her

longue. Will Deal was the first pouting man she had come across since the death of her father. Now that she thought of her father, Will Deal resembled her father quite a bit. Both men reminded her of monkey-paps. That was an unfair thing to say about one's daddy, "rest th' dead," but the truth is the light.

The van whizzed along the highway until it neared Philmont Drive, then, "shorty-pants" eased his tiny foot off the gas pedal; "I reckon this is it, Miss Madie."

"You reckon what is it?" Miss Madie answered matter-a-factly. Personally, this was it or she was ready to meet her creator. Dulleville wasn't her idea of an evening of fun and frolic. Will Deal was a fool and a grunt if he thought she was going to break down and cry because ride time was running out. God was her secret judge, Bayborough Heights had never looked so good to her, younguns 'n all, than it did at this moment. Getting rid of gloomy Will was a pleasure she looked forward to. No offense intended regarding Mister Will's good intention when he invited her for a spin, but she had spent more cheerful afternoons soaking her feet and picking her corns.

The van came to a stand still in front of Apartment 2A, however, Miss Madie made no move to alight. She sat pulling her fingers and listening to the joints snap. She had a strange feeling that something was amiss inside apartment 2A. Will Deal asked, "cat got your tongue?"

"Nope. I am just trying to get my poor self together before I put my head inside th' door of apartment 2A."

"I was under the impression that you live alone, Miss Madie."

"You thought like Patty dreampt."

"Now, Miss Madie, you mustn't talk out of school."

"They call Miss Madie Perkins th' school."

Will chuckled, "you tickle me, Miss Madie. Reckon I'll evah understand you?"

"Don't sweat yourself trying to figgah me out-I've tried to figgah myself out and all I've come up with is swollen eyes from the lack of sleep."

"Go away from here, Miss Madie, you ain't fooling th' champ with your fish guts airs."

"Fish gut airs! Well! 'fore my Lord, this just ain't my day," Miss Madie fumed as she fumbled with the door handle of the van.

"No need running out on me while you're mad. Come on 'n tell me something about yourself-I'll never know you better if you keep jumping about on Indian rubber legs."

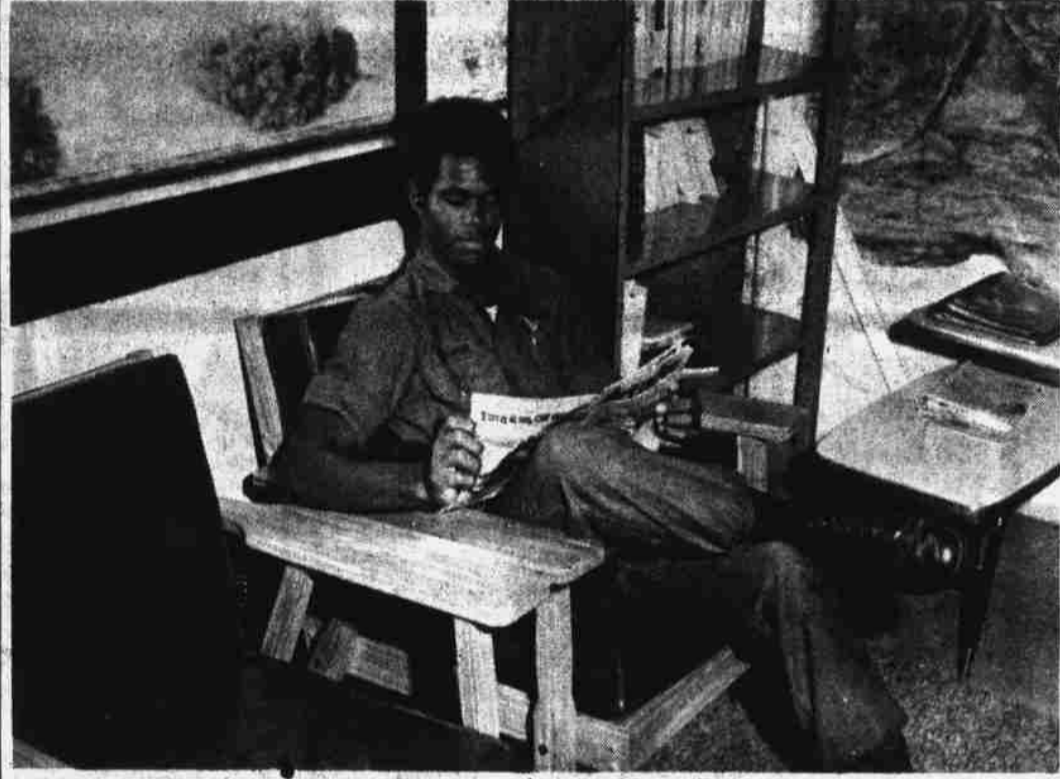
Miss Madie left off fumbling with the door handle, threw her head back and laughed; "th' still you drinks th' most slops." -Continued.



MOBILE TENNIS - Some of the principals involved in the recent kickoff of the Pepsi-Cola Mobile Tennis Program in Atlanta, Ga. are seen after the press conference/luncheon held to demonstrate features of the program. Designed to teach inner city youngsters basic tennis techniques, the program

is sponsored jointly by Pepsi-Cola Beverage Corporation of Atlanta and the City of Atlanta, Department of Parks and Recreation. Left to right are: Branch Curington, tennis pro at Washington Park Tennis Center; Althea Gibson, twice undefeated United States and Wimbledon Women's Singles Champion and national

director, Pepsi-Cola Mobile Tennis Program; Rosa Hill, supervisor, Women's Athletics, Department of Parks and Recreation and coordinator of the Atlanta Mobile Tennis Program; Hank Jackson, Department of Parks and Recreation; and Sam Hall, manager, Communications Programs.



CADET HARVIN UNDERGOING ROTC BASIC SUMMER TRAINING PROGRAM

undergoing the 1973 ROTC Basic Summer Training Program at Fort Knox, Kentucky. He will enter the Advanced ROTC Program at South Carolina State College,

Orangeburg, South Carolina. Cadet Harvin resides with his mother, Mrs. Amanda Harvin at 3930 Azalea Drive, Apt. H., Charleston, South Carolina.

VEP Plans Services Designed to Aid Minority Political Workers

ATLANTA, GA - The non-partisan Voter Education Project, Inc. (VEP) has announced plans to initiate a comprehensive South-wide system of services designed to give greater impact to activities assisting minority political participation.

Since 1962, the Voter Education Project has worked exclusively in the area of minority politics, organizing programs of voter registration, citizenship education, research, technical assistance to black elected officials, and leadership training for blacks and chicanos.

The programmatic services will be expanded by an "area coordinator" concept, to be implemented October 1, which will enable the Voter Education Project to pinpoint areas of greatest need and deliver programs based on those local needs.

Areas of need will be identified on a regional scale with input from VEP's research department, its area coordinators, and its Board of Directors, as well as minority elected officials and community leaders. Current staff will be incorporated in the new structure.

In the past, the VEP has relied on a system of three state offices, youth organizers, and field organizers. Under the area coordinator concept, the VEP will discontinue support of the state offices in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Arkansas, while maintaining and expanding services to the constituencies in those areas.

The programmatic innovations were announced by VEP Executive Director John Lewis and VEP President, Harry Hogue, following an intensive three-day meeting of the staff and board at the Moton Conference Center in Capahosic, Virginia.

Basic to the new organizational concept will be an incoming WATS telephone system which will enable individuals throughout the South to call the VEP office in Atlanta without charge. Thus, VEP will maintain an information service and will be

able to respond directly to requests for assistance and information without the concentration of staff and supplies in large offices outside Atlanta. Mechanical functions will be centralized as a means of releasing more programs for minorities.

In the program area, the VEP will continue its work in the areas of voter registration and citizenship education. Since its inception, more than two and one-half million black voters have become registered in the South. In the past eight years, the number of black elected officials has increased from fewer than 100 to over 1,200.

Expanded program concerns will include the development of additional citizenship education projects, sponsoring seminars to increase the understanding of political power, providing educational devices for examination of relevant issues such as revenue sharing, and the use of existing laws and legal services to remedy some of the injustices and problems which deter minority political participation and dilute minority political strength.

Non-Profit Groups May Buy Under State Contracts

RALEIGH - Volunteer non-profit fire departments and life saving rescue squads may now purchase gasoline, oil and tires under state contract, Rep. H. M. Michaux, Jr., Democrat of Durham said.

Michaux said the recent session of the General Assembly enacted the measure, which means great savings to the two volunteer organizations.

The legislator cited an example of the possible savings. "Under state contract, regular gas is around 27 cents a gallon. In our area, volunteer fire departments and life saving crews pay in the neighborhood of 40 cents a gallon. So you can see the savings for these two worthwhile organizations."

In addition to gas, oil and tires, the volunteer groups may now purchase surplus state property on the same basis as counties and municipalities do.

TOTE BOX
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DAILY LIVING

By WILLIAM THORPE



Our Creator is not Responsible

It is difficult to see how things have happened for the best when a fine soldier, son, or daughter is taken. It's also difficult how a person can make the best of such happenings. The death of any young person, for whatever cause, always appears untimely. When crime is associated with such a death, when an innocent little boy or girl is molested and killed by a sex fiend, how can this be squared with any philosophy on earth? Why should a loving, all-merciful God ever permit such an outrage?

Those are two questions that impress me at times during my moments of meditation.

In my opinion, God in a personal sense has nothing to do with such happenings in our every day lives; because if our creator of this universe was such a being as to have had a personal awareness of such a crime and had the power to prevent a little child from being ravished and murdered and did not instantly exercise it, we would probably have to conclude that God, Himself, was evil incarnated. (What about it preachers?)

If we would put ourselves and our feelings aside for a moment and view humanity at large, we will see that throughout the ages, as now, it has been the injustices and the

sufferings visited upon the comparative few which have always, eventually, brought about improvements and protective measures that have helped save many from like injustices and sufferings.

For instances, motorists have had to be killed on a dangerous curve, or at an intersection, before authorities were forced to put up proper warning and stop signs, thus saving the lives of many more otherwise potential victims.

The shocking change in moral conduct of the young, the alarming increase in the number of divorces and broken homes, has stirred sex authorities, doctors, educators, business and industrial leaders, and also ministers to give this complicated and highly serious problem number one attention.

Now, we might wish in our weaker moments, that our Creator was the kind of God who would protect us from every unhappy or evil happening and would see to it that we received every heart's desire without any effort or sacrifice on our part. But, if God were the kind of being who watched over every move we made, and each time we were about to make a wrong move, prevented us from doing it, we would perhaps be like a remote controlled device, possessing no freedom of action, no authority, no

individual power of decision and ability to grow and develop through our mistakes, and in the end, we would have no power to evolve our own soul, to build our own future.

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