

A SHIPBOARD ACQUAINTANCE

I first saw Macon when he came aboard ship one rainy morning in Hong Kong. He was a small boy with long unkept black hair hanging over his forehead and almost concealing the beady green eyes that seemed to stare wildly from his pinched, sallow almost ratlike face. His teeth were yellow and somewhat fang-like.

He turned out to be an extremely nervous fellow who provided the crew with no end of laugh-provoking incidents. There was the night on the conning tower. While he was serving as lookout during a storm, a shout from the captain so panicked Macon that he jerked about and, grabbing the "old man's" coat, pulled most of its buttons off. And just before what turned out to be a mock invasion, he paced the "fantail" all night long bemoaning his certain death on the morrow.

With his unlikely appearance, his extreme nervousness, and his Floridian origin, he was inevitably and almost immediately dubbed "the swamp boy" by some members of the crew. The title seemingly annoyed him not at all, however; and in spite of another of his idiosyncrasies, that of punctuating almost every other word of a sentence with a kind of "sniffing" sound, he seemed to get along quite well with most of the crew. And when we returned to Japan, I learned, to my surprise, that he had quite a large and interesting number of "girlsans" with whom he spent his time in Yokosuka.

Every night at liberty call he was the first man off the ship and into the boat for shore. I was in a different division and never became well acquainted with Macon but occasionally encountered him ashore, invariably accompanied by one and sometimes two of the local "babysans."

A ship's movement from port to port normally precludes any long romance ashore, and it is usually not customary for ship-based sailors to have a steady girl on the "beach." Macon was no exception, that is, not until we pulled into Beppu, a small resort town. It was there that Macon fell in love with a Japanese girl known only as Keiko. He would return to the ship and spend hours in descriptions of her fascinating qualities. After a few of these harangues I became convinced that he actually loved the girl, a fact I should have liked very much to be able to forget at a later date.

For it was my misfortune to wander, early one Saturday afternoon, into a little club called the Maxim. I had never been there before, but it was a small quiet place and the drinks were good; so I spent the afternoon and a portion

of the night. Eventually, however, an overdose of Scotch gave me an extreme dislike for the place and prompted my departure with a small Japanese girl whose name was Kay. At least that was one of her names. Japanese girls may have any number of names. There is a family name that most of her American boy friends never learn, a given name ending with "ko," and usually several other names, all American, that she has picked to her own liking. Kay was a friendly girl, and during the course of the night we exchanged photographs as is the custom among G. I.'s and their Japanese girl friends.

Returning to the ship on Sunday morning, I waved to Macon, who had been on duty for the weekend and was just leaving. After checking the radio room and finding the watchstander awake and everything running smoothly, I went below for some sleep. It was approximately three in the morning when I was awakened, shocked by a blow to my left temple. Though only half awake, I felt an instinctive sudden fear, when through the haze the figure of Macon, his green eyes gleaming, his face an insane mask of fierce hate, began to materialize. In the weird red glow cast by the safety light overhead Macon was an eerie, fantastic sight.

Quite suddenly I was completely awake and realized that the thing pressed tightly against my head was a small pistol that Macon held in his right hand. I couldn't see it, but I knew that it was the little .25 Macon owned and had used once before, ineffectively, in a poker dispute. I realized with sudden desperation that it could hardly fail to be effective here and hoped frantically that this was some sort of joke, knowing all the while that Macon didn't know me well enough for that sort of thing.

When he began to swear, at first in a low voice and then with increasing frenzy, I knew he was drunk, and I began to panic. Sober he was unpredictable and drunk—when he brought up his left hand and I saw that it held my photograph, I could neither move nor breathe. I knew that I was quite likely to die in a matter of moments. According to all good murder mysteries the victim watches the killer's finger tighten on the trigger. Strange, but I wasn't able to do this. My eyes were open, but I saw nothing and my brain registered no thought whatever.

The gun went off.

Macon's ravings had awakened R. B. in the bunk just above mine; he had acted quickly and quietly, catching Macon's hand with a downward kick, then jumping him from behind to relieve him of the pistol, which had discharged harmlessly into the empty bottom bunk.

Macon ranted and swore for some time but was eventually quieted in the sick bay and put to bed. For some months afterward I scarcely saw him, and when I did he flashed a sneer of hatred that was frightening to say the least.

It was almost a year later in Hawaii, where he had another girl, that he apologized and suggested we forget the incident. I told him I had forgotten it long ago. I continued to remain quite wary, however, when alone on the weather deck on those dark nights in the middle of the Pacific, until Macon was given some sort of medical discharge and I knew I would never see him again, at least not in the Orient.

GOSSIP OF C. C.

Well here I am! I have been asked to dig up some dirt about the nice people that go to C. C. Before you read this column I want to say just one thing. "I like you all so please don't be mad at me."

Congratulations to June Sherrill, who got a beautiful diamond from Skippy Pierce.

Here's hoping that Slade Joyner isn't seriously ill. We have heard that he spends a lot of time at the hospital.

BIG SCOOP!!! Wong's interest is at W.C.U.N.C.

Warning to Freshman boys—Jo Anne Hovis has her eye on one of you.

We have two new lovely co-eds at C. C. this quarter. A special welcome to Betsy and Marlene. (The line forms to the rear, boys.)

We hear Ken Harris is really a ladies' man.

Tony Thomas is always interested in what is going on at Myers Park High. Wonder why?

Pat Faulkner has eyes only for Zara Kelly.

Buy your coffee at the Owl's Roost! (Is this plug all right, Rea?)

WANTED — Margaret Faulkenberg to dig up some good gossip. Raeford Brown and Elizabeth Long certainly make a cute couple.

Well, I guess I better go chop off my head. I still hope everybody knows "I like 'em." If anybody knows any dirty dirt about their friends (?) just let me know and we'll lose friends together.

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE

(Continued from 1)

year, the first of which will be presented in February when the Charlotte College Glee Club will make its second appearance of the current year.

Don Trapp, Bill Reid, Justin Hendricks, and Larry Brown comprise the present staff of the assembly committee and Dr. Pierre Macy is the faculty advisor. Any suggestions or criticisms concerning the assemblies will be appreciated by the committee.

ODE TO A SLOT MACHINE

O! There you stand
So cold and still,
Sans foot and hand,
Sans heart to feel.
No sight, but yet—
Methinks you see
This fool who let
You take your fee,
For which you gave
Apostrophe;
Add nothing save
This misery.

Yea, there you stand,
O metal thief!
Where's your band
And outlaw chief,
The mastermind
Mentality
Who undermined
Legality?
Who'll get the spoil
You steal from me,
For which I toil
Religiously?

And on you stand
Undaunted by scorn,
You foul brigand,
Release my coin!
I curse and rave,
And I deride;
But you, iron knave,
You have no pride!
You stand with such
Rigidity—
While facing much
Acridly!

And there you stand
So cold and still,
Sans foot and hand,
Sans heart to feel.
Numb to my blow,
Mute to my plea,
Till now I know
Futility;
I waken to
Reality,
Conceding to
Finality.

Love is like an onion
We taste it with delight
But when it's gone we wonder
Whatever made us bite.

A nail is something to aim at
while hitting your thumb.

Golf is a good walk spoiled.

Home is the place where they
have to take you in when you go
there.