

Those Not Without Guilt

by Sheila Welch

With the rapidity of those events which happen so quickly that no one is later able to recall exactly what did take place, the birthday dream of seven-year old Jimmy Wilson was transformed from a shiny new blue two-wheeled bicycle to a twisted, crumpled wreck. Jimmy himself was being sped to the hospital, barely alive in the back of an ambulance. The siren cried ominously into the dusk, disturbing slightly the feeling of well-being that encompassed the people of Springfield during their supper hour.

"Some kind of sports car . . . that's what it was!" But the only witness to the accident was an old man, Jimmy's grandfather, who knew more about little boys and bicycles than the shakes and models of the new cars. The village police had begun their action: appeals were being sent out to all nearby television and radio stations, and road blocks were set up on several of the main roads.

On the outskirts of town at radio station WIND, afternoon disc jockey Ralph Means anxiously put another long playing record on the turntable. Glancing at the studio clock, he noted that it was ten before six . . . ten minutes till the news broadcast, and the night announcer, Andy Owens, had not yet appeared. Andy had been late twice that week; the station manager would not tolerate lateness, and it would mean the end for Andy if he missed the news. At five till six the door swung open and Andy entered the room, shrugged off his sport coat and hurried to the desk where the stack of news releases was waiting for him. As he glanced over them in hurried last minute preparation, Ralph thrust another sheaf of the small yellow releases at him and turned to leave. There was no time to finish looking over the material; the record was ending and the red light signalled six o'clock.

"Good evening . . . this is Andy Owens with the six o'clock news. First on the world scene . . . the Algerian rebel government has served notice that it will not go along with the ceasefire France has ordered in Algeria. It says 'serious and solid guarantees' must be given the Algerian people first. The Rebel position, issued in a statement from . . ."

He read automatically, scarcely thinking about the printed words and awoke from his reverie to hear himself saying, ". . . and after a word from our sponsor, the local news." He picked up the smaller pile of local news bulletins and scanned them quickly. They were all commonplace; a small fire, no damage done, the score of a high school baseball game.

Unexpectedly, Ralph came back into the room. "This just came in as I was leaving . . ." He handed Andy a hastily written message and left once again. Andy glanced at the paper . . . this item was not routine — at least not in Springfield — and his eyes remained fixed to it. When he was able to look up from the paper his glance traveled to his image, reflected palely in the glass surrounding the broadcasting booth. With his handkerchief he wiped the perspiration from his forehead and responded to the red light which commanded his attention.

"And now the news on the local scene . . . Jimmy Wilson of Hill Street was struck down by a hit and run driver only a few minutes ago. He is in critical condition at General Hospital. Police are still searching for the driver of the late model sports car which was last seen travelling at a high rate of speed on South Cedar St. Local firemen answered a call today at Woodvale Drive where a trash fire had spread to an adjoining vacant lot, but there was no serious property damage reported. The weather for Springfield, generally fair with moderate temperatures tomorrow, high 62 to 70 . . ." Andy went into the windup, finishing exactly on time, and played a taped advertisement as he prepared for his six hour program of popular music and chatter. When he was about to go on the air again, the telephone halted him.

The caller was brief, with the curtness of familiarity and the knowledge that an announcer must give his attention to the program. "Chief Haley Owens, we're calling on all the radio stations around this area. Will you broadcast a special appeal to the driver of the car that hit the Wilson boy tonight? We figure it was probably a bunch of teen-agers and they're scared to turn themselves in."

With that, Andy was on the air. He went through all the motions, reading letters, dedicating songs, playing the popular music of the day — but always running through his mind was the picture of a little boy lying very still among the ruins of a new bicycle. . .

"If anyone has any information about the late model sports car which struck down and injured Jimmy Wilson late this afternoon, please get in touch with Police Chief Haley immediately. Jimmy is still in critical condition at General Hospital." The phone rang again. This caller did not have the respect for Owens' responsibility at the radio station, and the call was not intended to be brief. It was Mrs. Owens. "Andy! Haven't they found out who hit that little boy tonight? Honestly . . . it just isn't safe to let a child out of your sight any more. What if it had been Terry or Anne?" The announcer interrupted his wife and put another pile of records on the automatic changer. His listeners undoubtedly wondered at the lack of comment on the part of the usually loquacious Andy.

"Honey, they're doing all they can, I'm sure they'll find the car somewhere . . . probably tonight."

"It just isn't right . . . giving drivers' licenses to boys that age and letting them speed around and kill innocent people . . ."

"How do you know it was a bunch of teenagers?"

"Well, if not, it was some drunk. Why don't the police lock these people up before they get out to do their damage?"

I can't talk about it now. I have to tape some material for tomorrow. And what can I do about it anyway?" He hung up, his wife's words still grating against his ears. What if it had been his own child? A heavy feeling, half fear and half nausea sank in his stomach as he pictured Terry lying still on the ground, knock-

ed down by a car speeding away from the scene, only its tail lights visible in the dusk. He remembered what his wife had said . . . teenagers . . . or drunks. People were always so quick to judge to blame. What was that he had learned as a kid? Let the one without guilt cast the first stone . . . something like that. She had been drunk before . . . many times, and had no room to talk. Somehow things never seemed so wrong when you could put yourself in the place of the guilty one. And who was to blame? Was it the driver who left the child? Could you condemn a man for being afraid? Was it the child, dashing blindly and heedlessly into the street? Or perhaps the parent, too busy to pay attention? The ending notes of the last record brought his mind back to his job.

He made the announcement again. "Jimmy Wilson, who was struck down by a hit and run driver late this afternoon is still in critical condition in General Hospital. If anyone has any information about a late model sports car . . ."

In the hospital waiting room an old man stood by the window and looked out at the passing cars and groups of people. Hearing a footstep at the door, he turned around abruptly, thinking that it might be a member of the hospital staff with news of his grandson. It was a police officer looking for the boy's mother.

"She'll be here soon, officer. She's in with Jimmy now . . . look at them . . . down there on the street . . . Cars race by, they don't even look ahead of them to see what's on the road or behind them. All in such a hurry to get somewhere. And where do they end up? I was watchin' Jimmy, really I was . . ."

"Mr. Bryan, we think we have the boys who did it. They deny it; but of course they would . . . they're scared."

"It was the white car, wasn't it? It was the car I saw?"

"I don't know, Sir." Gently, "These boys drive a blue car".

"Mary . . . ?" Jimmy's mother entered the room. "Mary, is Jimmy all right? Let me go see him, tell him I'm sorry . . ."

"You've nothing to be sorry for, Dad. It wasn't your fault. He isn't awake . . . all we can do now is wait . . ."

The next few hours were filled with waiting for everyone. The chief of police sat slumped over his desk, a paper cup filled with tepid coffee in his hand. The telephone rang, alerting him into an upright position. He listened for a moment, and hung up. Warily, he instructed the desk sergeant to change the charge against two scared, protesting teenagers from leaving the scene of an accident to manslaughter.

Andy picked up the phone just before midnight and the final news report. He heard of the boy's death from Chief Haley, and then he was back on the air. The broadcast finished, he began closing up the radio station for the night. When he had everything in readiness for the next day's broadcast and checked to see that the program schedules were in order, he slipped out the door and hurried toward the elevator, trying to avoid the night watchman who always wanted to engage him in conversation. Waiting for the elevator to come

to the top floor, Andy reflected on what he would do. The thought of going home was appalling to him. He knew that his wife would wait up for him, as she nearly always did, not because she missed his presence at night, but in order that she might find fault with him for a thousand things done wrong during the day while he was at work. "Let her get to sleep," he thought. "I'll spare myself that tonight, at least. And tomorrow . . ." His musings were interrupted by the appearance of the watchman.

"Evening, Mr. Owens. Leaving now? I'd better go down with you so I can lock up when you leave." Sam was very responsible; it would never have occurred to him that Andy could lock the door behind himself as he left. The elevator door opened, and both men entered it.

"Mr. Owens, do you expect they'll ever get the guy who killed that little boy tonight? You know, they let those two kids go."

"Yeah, Sam. They always get their man," Andy quipped, only half joking.

"Do you think it was kids? Or a drunk?"

"No, probably neither. Probably some poor son of a gun in a hurry to get somewhere . . . or away from somewhere . . . scared he was going to be late . . . scared to go back and see what he had done."

"Seems to me, Mr. Owens, that anyone who would do something like that should be given life in prison . . . do you think they'll do that, if they find him?"

"I expect so, Sam. Don't worry . . . they'll get him."

"Night, Mr. Owens."

"Good night, Sam."

Andy left the building and walked toward the deserted parking lot where he had left his car earlier that day when he had come to work in such a hurry. It was parked in a back section of the lot, hardly visible from either the road or the studio, and he had to walk for several minutes to reach it. He breathed a silent prayer that he would not find it, that by some chance it would not be there, that the whole night would prove to have been a nightmare. The car was still where he had left it—the shiny white Thunderbird with the slightly crumpled fender—with traces of blue paint still remaining. He slid behind the wheel, but he could not bring himself to start the car.

All Clubs Must Apply For Charter

"Those clubs which have been operating on the St. Andrews campus under a temporary charter previous to December 1962, must have their application for charters in the hands of Dean Blanton on or before April 1, 1963, for evaluation before the May 1 deadline for approval or renewal of all charters. Unless there are valid reasons for an extension of tentative approval, the organizations which have not complied with these requirements shall be considered as having no official status."

The heart pumps the 11 pints of blood in the average circulatory system at the rate of 166 gallons per hour.

Coeds

by Bill Perryman

Although I am no connoisseur of the female version of Homo Sapien, I believe a few facts exist about the coeds which would allow them to be classified according to three distinctions: **The Ones in Love, The Ones Trying to Get a Man, and The Studiers.** The only common fact apparent to us college freshmen about our female counterparts on the other side of the campus is that they are all females. Here the similarities end. I have tried, however, to locate a thread of homogeneity among these flighty females in their reasons for being in college.

The Ones in Love are easy to distinguish from the rest of the girls. These "loves", as I shall call them, transport themselves back and forth across the school grounds with an aura of holiness wreathing their innermost thoughts. If a love is caught in a day-dreaming state, which is not hard to do, she will invariably say "Huh?", then heartily agree with everything her interrupter says and finally wander off either in search of her true one, or to lose herself again on her own Cloud Nine. If a love is ever drawn out of her shell to talk about her lover, she will say that the only reason she is at college is to "get a good education so I can raise our kids properly." This is probably as close to the truth as she will come in her college career.

If a love is looking for an education so as to be able to raise her children, then watch out for the one who is just looking for a man. These are the dangerous ones. They are usually the best dressed; the ones found where the boys are. These girls have cornered most of the womanly wiles in Mother Nature's bag of feminine tricks and they will use them without mercy on the object of their intentions. The man-hunters take the initiative in flirtatious glances and throwing of the arm around the opponents waist. Once caught in one of these creature's webs the male has only a short while to enjoy himself with the boys before he has given up his bachelor-like seclusion along with his class ring or fraternity pin. Then he is hooked and the girl, now of his desires, has a reason to finish college: to be with him.

The "Studier" is a different type of girl with a reason to stay in school which she finds in herself. She is the proverbial snook who wears big, thick glasses and walks around campus with a stack of books in her arms, one which she is usually reading. She never puts herself out to perfect her manner of dress or makeup, but usually is neat and orderly. She won't chase the boys and seldom dates. If, however, she does fall for a boy, her's is the love to be desired. For her love means complete devotion to her beau without that restraining nagging the middle classification is liable to start once the searcher has captured her foe and has him firmly enmeshed in the net of lifelong wedlock. The studier who has found her man turns into a love and, as the old saying goes, "they lived happily ever after."

Isn't college life wonderful?