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She shrugged. "Go ahead. Only I don't think I can manage the smile." She looked at him curiously as he focused. "Do you always carry that thing around with you?"

He nodded. "Practically sleep with it. If you hear rumors around the campus that one Peter Macintosh is slightly cracked, ignore them. It's only that people don't understand how much time you have to spend at your life work if you intend to be a success. I learn something about photography every time I snap a picture." He aimed the camera at her and clicked. "There. I'll let you see them when they're developed. What's your name?"

"Jinny Prentiss."

"Jinny? Nice. What's all the grief about? I saw you come out of the Gamma house. Somebody insult you?"

Jinny shook her head. Her eyes welled up again. "It-it's only that my father drives a truck."

Peter Macintosh nodded, his lips tightening. "I get it. Take away their silver spoons and maybe those sorority beetles would have different ideas about someone who works hard for a living. They're all the same. You're well out of it."

"But I'm not!" Jinny bit her lip. "It's what I've always wanted, counted on. And now everything's spoiled."

HE SHOOK his head, looking down at her. "You've got to learn about the world. Like me. I've had a couple of years of it -- have to wait on tables to put myself through. As a result, my social prestige among my fellow juniors, male and female, is that of a June bug in the salad. Little they know that some day they'll be claiming college acquaintance with me in an attempt to share in the fame of my genius."

Jinny's lashes flickered. "Are you a genius?"

He nodded seriously. "Not recognized as yet among my contemporaries, perhaps,

but one awaits the judgment of posterity with confidence."

Jinny laughed right through her tears. "You're crazy."

"You see? You recognize one of the distinguishing marks almost immediately. Hold that smile."

He clicked. "Splendid. And now for some gayer pose."

Jinny's smile vanished. "Sorry. I don't think I could. I don't feel gay."

"A bit of retouching will take care of that. How about a removal of shoes and stockings and a bit of wading in the brook?"

"But there are rocks in there; slippery ones."

"Precisely. The teetering, slightly alarmed uncertainty is what I want to catch."

He caught it all right, a beautiful shot of Jinny sprawling frantically for her balance as her bare heel slid off the top of a smooth stone. His later picture, of her sitting waist deep in the water with the brook gurgling around her, he said he would name, "God-

dess in repose". Jinny, clambering damply up the bank, suggested "drowned rat" as more apropos. He snapped her again, hair thrown back, walking barefooted on the grass. The shock of the cold water had lightened Jinny's depression for the moment, but it all came back now, with overwhelming suddenness, as she sat down to put on her shoes and stockings.

It was as though, somehow, she had suddenly become extremely conspicuous. Two boys looked around, stared.

Peter gazed at her unhappily. "For one who has just been immortalized by having her picture snapped by the great Macintosh, you show a singular lack of ebullience. But I suppose it's always a bit of a blow to find out about life. I'll walk you to your dormitory."

Jinny managed to hold back her tears until she got out of her wet things. Then she threw herself on the bed and wept bitterly. She had been so prepared to like them all -- so anxious to be one of

them. But she wasn't wanted. She was suddenly more achingly alone than she'd ever been before.

She received no more bids from the other sororities. Peter explained the workings of the campus grapevine to her. It seemed that there was an extremely well developed caste system at Yates of wealth and family. The only thing that could break it down, Peter asserted, was to be a star football player, and, looking at her, he opined that she'd be a little too light. It didn't bother him since all he was interested in was photography and learning about things, but it must be tough on a sensitive girl. There were other colleges which were different, he assured her. Why didn't she transfer?

Jinny shook her head. She couldn't. It would be an admission to herself that the Gammas were right, that she was inferior to them. She told Peter that she wouldn't quit. Eventually it was possible that they'd change their minds about her, grow to like her.

He shrugged as though he couldn't see why that should be important, but he seemed very glad she was going to stay.

It wasn't as bad as it might have been. Jinny avoided contact with the sorority group, but her roommate, a small round girl named Martha Hunt, was very friendly, and she formed a few tentative acquaintanceships with the girls at the dormitory. Peter was always somewhere about with his camera. Jinny liked Peter. He wasn't as handsome as the sport-coated athletes who thronged the campus, but they didn't have that keen look about the eyes or that tiny humorous quirk of the lips.

PETER met her outside the library just as the trees on the mountaintop bearded the late afternoon sun. His head was high, his

eyes glinted, and there was an unwonted swing to his stride. "Greetings, scarab. Been looking for you. Thought we might run over our itinerary for this most gorgeous of evenings. First, where shall we dine?"

Jinny blinked at him. "You mean both of us together?"

"You interpret my words correctly."

"But don't you eat in the restaurant kitchen after you've finished waiting on tables?"

He clucked his tongue. "This preoccupation with the past is morbid. Must we rehash my struggles as I was fighting my way to a place in the sun? You are observing a man who has balanced his last tray."

Jinny's teeth caught her lip regretfully. "Peter! I told you it would happen."

His eyelids flickered. "What would?"

"That they'd fire you if you didn't stop telling people to say 'please' when they asked you for anything. You'll have to apologize. Maybe they'll

must be crazy! What will you live on?"

His smile was expansive. "The fruits of my genius. Need I say more?"

"You certainly do need."

He shook his head. "For the moment I prefer to shroud my triumph in a glamorous cloak of mystery. Let it suffice that I am the recipient of a handsome cheque, a glowing tribute to my artistry."

Jinny's eyes were shining. "Peter, tell me! Please!"

"Sorry. You'll know all in due time. I confess that possession of so much wealth opens new vistas before my dazzled eyes, one of which I would like to take up with you at this juncture."

"What is it?"

"The Junior Prom, a function I had intended to pass up for lack of the necessary appurtenances -- these being a girl I cared to escort and funds to purchase the indispensable soup and fish. The latter is now at hand, but the former remains in abeyance. How about it?"

"Translation, please."

"Will you go to the Junior Prom with me?"

Jinny swallowed. She wanted to go, almost desperately, but she was afraid. The Gammas would be there, along with girls from the other sororities. They had made it so definite that she didn't belong. She couldn't bear being snubbed again. The humiliation of that last time still burned inside of her. "I -- I don't think I can, Peter."

"Someone else beat me to it?"

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