



# SHORT MASTERPIECES

STORIES FROM THE WORLD'S LITERATURE

---

ALEICHEM • ALGREN • BARRETT  
BERNSTEIN • BIDPAI • BJÖRNSON • BIERCE  
BOCCACCIO • BRADBURY • CHEKHOV  
CLEMENS • CRANE • CALDERÓN  
COLLIER • DAUDET • DE MAUPASSANT  
DE LA MARE • DOSTOEVSKY • CALDWELL  
DAVIES • DUNSANY • FORESTER  
FARRELL • FORSTER • GORKY • GIBBS  
GOLDSTONE • HANLEY • GOLDSMITH  
HARDY • HAWTHORNE • HAYCOX  
GILL • HEARN • HECHT • O. HENRY • HUXLEY  
GREENE • JACKSON • MALONEY  
KANTOR • MCLAVERTY • MANSFIELD  
IRVING • MATHESON • MAUGHAM  
MAUROIS • MELVILLE • MÉRIMÉE  
O'FLAHERTY • PALMA • PARKER • POE  
QUIROGA • RUNYON • SAKI • SANSOM  
CAROYAN • STEINBECK • TOLSTOY  
ANDBERG • STEEGMULLER • STEELE  
ISLE-ADAM • VON KLEIST  
NER • WEIDMAN • WHITE • VALDÉS  
Z • WOOLLCOTT • ZAMIATIN  
TNER • ZUGSMITH • ZWEIG

114

2707

外文书库

8410360

# 75 SHORT MASTERPIECES

Stories from the World's Literature

Edited By

ROGER B. GOODMAN



BANTAM BOOKS

TORONTO • NEW YORK • LONDON • SYDNEY



RL 7, IL age 14 and up

75 SHORT MASTERPIECES  
STORIES FROM THE WORLD'S LITERATURE

*A Bantam Classic* / April 1961

2nd printing . September 1962	7th printing . November 1966
3rd printing . . . . August 1963	8th printing . September 1967
4th printing . . . . January 1964	9th printing . December 1968
5th printing . . . . August 1965	10th printing . February 1969
6th printing . . . . March 1966	11th printing . . . October 1969
12th printing . . . December 1970	

*Bantam edition* / February 1972

14th printing . September 1972	19th printing . . February 1977
15th printing . . . . June 1973	20th printing . . . October 1977
16th printing . . . . June 1974	21st printing . . . . May 1979
17th printing . . . . May 1975	22nd printing . November 1980
18th printing . December 1975	23rd printing . November 1981
24th printing . . . August 1983	

All rights reserved.  
Copyright © 1961 by Bantam Books, Inc.

ISBN 0-553-23978-3

**COPYRIGHT NOTICES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The following selections in this anthology are copyrighted, and they may not be reproduced in any form without the consent of the authors, their publishers or their agents. The copyright notices are listed below and on the pages following (pp. v, vi) which constitute an extension of this copyright page:

"A Wedding Without Musicians" reprinted from *Tevye's Daughters* by Sholem Aleichem by permission of Crown Publishers, Inc. Copyright 1949 by The Children of Sholem Aleichem and Crown Publishers, Inc.

"He Swung and He Missed" by Nelson Algren reprinted by permission of A. Watkins, Inc. © 1942 Nelson Algren.

"Senor Payroll" by William E. Barrett reprinted from *AUTUMN SOUTHWEST REVIEW* by permission of the publisher. Copyright 1943 by Southern Methodist University Press.

"Houseparty" by Walter Bernstein originally published by *THE NEW YORKER* reprinted by permission of the author. Copyright 1939 *THE NEW YORKER MAGAZINE, INC.*

"I See You Never" by Ray Bradbury reprinted from *THE NEW YORKER* by permission of Harold Matson Company Inc. Copyright 1947 by Ray Bradbury.

"The Lottery Ticket" by Ventura Garcia Calderon, translated by Richard Phibbs, reprinted by permission of The Golden Cockerel Press.

"Daughter" reprinted from *The Complete Stories of Erskine Caldwell* by permission of Little, Brown and Company and the author. Copyright 1935 by Erskine Caldwell.

**Bantam Short Stories Anthologies**

**Ask your bookseller for the books you have missed**

**DARK FORCES** edited by Kirby McCauley

**50 GREAT AMERICAN SHORT STORIES**

edited by Milton Crane

**50 GREAT GHOST STORIES**

edited by John Canning

**50 GREAT HORROR STORIES**

edited by John Canning

**50 GREAT SHORT STORIES**

edited by Milton Crane

**75 SHORT MASTERPIECES**

edited by Roger Goodman

**TEN MODERN AMERICAN SHORT STORIES**

edited by David Sohn

**TREASURY OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE**

edited by B. A. Botkin

**TEN TOP STORIES** by David Sohn

**TREASURY OF JEWISH FOLKLORE**

edited by Nathan Ausubel

**TWENTY GRAND SHORT STORIES**

edited by Ernestine Taggart

**THE WORLD'S BEST SHORT STORIES**

edited by Roger B. Goodman

1440  
1943

Dostoevsky to Dorothy Parker . . .  
Thomas Hardy to Shirley Jackson . . .  
Sholem Aleichem to James T. Farrell . . .

Few anthologies can claim as glittering an array of writers as appear in **75 SHORT MASTERPIECES**. Spanning the centuries from Boccaccio to Bradbury, the selections include works by the finest authors of the Western world.

The best English versions have been used for stories originally written in foreign languages; in many cases new, brilliant translations have been made especially for this anthology.

Horror, comedy, surprise, drama, human interest, pure entertainment, **75 SHORT MASTERPIECES** embraces every kind of short story ever written.

"Absent-Mindedness in a Parish Choir" reprinted from *Life's Little Ironies* by Thomas Hardy by permission of Macmillan and Company Ltd. and the Trustees of the Hardy Estate, The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd.

"A Question of Blood" reprinted from *By Rope and Lead* by Ernest Haycox by permission of Little, Brown and Company. Copyright 1937 by Ernest Haycox.

"The Lost Soul" by Ben Hecht reprinted from *A Book of Miracles* by permission of The Viking Press, Inc. Copyright 1939 by Ben Hecht.

"The Exact Science of Matrimony" from *The Gentle Grafter* by O. Henry. Copyright 1907 by Doubleday & Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

"Fard" reprinted from *Young Archimedes* by Aldous Huxley by permission of Harper & Brothers and Chatto & Windus Ltd. Copyright 1924, 1952 by Aldous Huxley.

"Charles" reprinted from *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson by permission of Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, Inc. Copyright 1948, 1949 by Shirley Jackson.

"Then Came The Legions" by MacKinlay Kantor reprinted from *Author's Choice* by permission of Coward-McCann, Inc. Copyright 1944 by MacKinlay Kantor.

"The Wild Duck's Nest" by Michael McLaverty reprinted from *Forty-Four Irish Short Stories*, edited by Devin A. Garrity, by permission of The Devin-Adair Company. Copyright 1955 by The Devin-Adair Company.

"A Toast To Captain Jerk" by Russell Maloney reprinted from *THE NEW YORKER* by permission. Copyright © 1939 THE NEW YORKER MAGAZINE, INC.

"Germans At Meat" reprinted from *The Short Stories of Katherine Mansfield* by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. and The Society of Authors (London). Copyright 1926, 1937 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

"Born of Man and Woman" by Richard Matheson reprinted from *FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION* by permission of the author. Copyright 1950 by Fantasy House, Inc.

"The Ant and the Grasshopper" reprinted from *Cosmopolitans* by W. Somerset Maugham. Copyright 1924 by W. Somerset Maugham. Reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc., William Heinemann Ltd. and the author.

"The Guardian Angel" by André Maurois reprinted by permission of the author.

"The Sniper" reprinted from *The Short Stories of Liam O'Flaherty* by permission of Jonathan Cape Ltd. and from *Spring Sowing* by Liam O'Flaherty by permission of Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

"The Standard of Living" reprinted from *The Portable Dorothy Parker* by permission of The Viking Press, Inc. Originally published in *THE NEW YORKER*. Copyright 1941 by Dorothy Parker.

"Three Letters . . . and a Footnote" by Horacio Quiroga reprinted from *A World of Great Stories*, edited by Hiram Haydn and John Cournos, by permission of Crown Publishers, Inc. Copyright 1947 by Crown Publishers, Inc.

"A Dangerous Guy Indeed" by Damon Runyon reprinted from *Runyon First and Last* by permission of J. B. Lippincott Company. Copyright 1924 by The Star Company; renewed 1952 by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

"Reginald's Choir Treat" by H. H. Munro reprinted from *The Short Stories of Saki* by permission of The Viking Press, Inc. and The Bodley Head Ltd. Copyright 1930 by The Viking Press, Inc.

"The Kiss" by William Sansom reprinted from *Something Terrible, Something Lovely* by permission of Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. and The Hogarth Press. Copyright 1954 by William Sansom.

"The Shepherd's Daughter" reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc. from *The Daring Young Man On The Flying Trapeze* by William Saroyan. © Copyright 1934 by The Modern Library, Inc.

"The Foreigner" by Francis Steegmuller reprinted from *THE NEW YORKER* by permission of the author. Copyright 1935 by Francis Steegmuller.

"Over the Hill" reprinted from *Once There Was a War* by John Steinbeck by permission of The Viking Press, Inc. and McIntosh & Otis, Inc. Copyright 1943, 1958 by John Steinbeck.

"The Three Hermits" reprinted from *Twenty-Three Tales [World's Classics Series]* by Leo Tolstoy, translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude, by permission of The Oxford University Press.

"The Beggar-Woman of Locarno" by Heinrich von Kleist, translated by E. N. Bennett, reprinted from *Selected German Short Stories [World's Classics Series]* by permission of The Oxford University Press.

"The Phoenix" reprinted from *The Cat's Cradle Book* by Sylvia Townsend Warner by permission of The Viking Press, Inc. and Chatto & Windus Ltd. Copyright 1940 by Sylvia Townsend Warner.

"Slipping Beauty" by Jerome Weidman reprinted from *The Horse That Could Whistle Dixie and Other Stories* by permission of Brandt & Brandt. Copyright 1939 by Jerome Weidman.

"The Hour of Letdown" reprinted from *The Second Tree From the Corner* by E. B. White by permission of Harper & Bros. and Hamish Hamilton Ltd. Originally published in *THE NEW YORKER*. Copyright 1951 by E. B. White.

"Luck" by Samuel Clemens reprinted from *The American Claimant and Other Stories and Sketches* by Mark Twain by permission of Harper & Brothers.

"The Chaser" by John Collier originally published in *THE NEW YORKER* reprinted by permission of Harold Matson Company, Inc. Copyright 1940 by John Collier.

"Fear" by Rhys Davies reprinted from *Collected Stories* by permission of the author. Copyright 1955 by William Heinemann Ltd.

"The Riddle" reprinted from *The Collected Tales of Walter de la Mare*, chosen by Edward Wagenknecht, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. and Richard de la Mare. Copyright 1923, 1950 by Walter de la Mare.

"The Heavenly Christmas Tree" reprinted from *An Honest Thief and Other Stories* by Fyodor Dostoevsky, translated by Constance Garnett, by permission of William Heinemann Ltd.

"The Ghosts" by Lord Dunsany reprinted from *The Sword of Welleran* by permission of Dowager Lady Dunsany. Copyright 1908.

"The Scoop" reprinted from *The Short Stories of James T. Farrell* by permission of *The Vanguard Press, Inc.* Copyright 1937 by *The Vanguard Press, Inc.*

"The Bedchamber Mystery" by C. S. Forester reprinted from *COSMOPOLITAN* by permission of *Harold Matson Company, Inc.* Copyright 1943 by *HEARST MAGAZINES, INC.*

"Mr. Andrews" reprinted from *The Collected Short Stories of E. M. Forster* by permission of *Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd.* and from *The Eternal Moment and Other Stories* by E. M. Forster by permission of *Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.* and renewed by E. M. Forster.

"The Test" by Angelica Gibbs reprinted from *THE NEW YORKER* by permission. Copyright © 1940 *THE NEW YORKER MAGAZINE, INC.*

"Truth and Consequences" by Brendon Gill reprinted from *THE NEW YORKER* by permission of the author. Copyright 1941 *THE NEW YORKER MAGAZINE, INC.*

"Virtuoso" by Herbert Goldstone reprinted from *FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION* by permission of *Mercury Press, Inc.* Copyright 1953 by *Mercury Press, Inc.*

"Her Lover" reprinted from *Chelkash and Other Stories* by Maxim Gorky by permission of *Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.* Published 1915 by *Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.*

"Proof Positive" by Graham Greene reprinted from *Nineteen Stories* by permission of *The Viking Press, Inc.*, *Monica McCall, Inc.* and the author. Copyright 1947 by *Graham Greene.*

"The Butterfly" by James Hanley reprinted from *People Are Curious* by permission of *Harold Ober Associates, Inc.* and the author. Copyright 1938, 1941 by *James Hanley.*

"Moonlight Sonata" by Alexander Woollcott reprinted from *While Rome Burns* by permission of *The Viking Press, Inc.* Originally published in *THE NEW YORKER*. Copyright 1934 by *Alexander Woollcott.*

"God" by Eugene Ivanovich Zamiatin reprinted from *New Russian Stories* by permission of *New Directions.* All Rights Reserved.

"How Grandpa Came Into the Money" by Elsa Zantner reprinted by permission of the author.

"The Three Veterans" by Leane Zudsmith reprinted from *THE NEW YORKER* by permission of the author. Copyright 1935 by *THE NEW YORKER MAGAZINE, INC.*

"Kong at the Seaside" by Arnold Zweig reprinted from *Playthings of Time* by permission of *The Viking Press, Inc.* Copyright 1935 by *The Viking Press, Inc.*

The following translations were originally made for this volume:  
"The Crime on Calle de la Persequida" by Palacio Valdes, translated by Eugenie Luhn; "A Game of Billiards" by Alphonse Daudet.  
"The Doctor's Heroism" by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam and "The Jewels of M. Lantin" by Guy de Maupassant, translated by Roger Goodman;  
"A Wicked Boy" by Anton Chekhov, translated by Helen Reeve.

This book may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by mimeograph or any other means, without permission.

For information address: *Bantam Books, Inc.*

Published simultaneously in the United States and Canada

---

*Bantam Books* are published by *Bantam Books, Inc.* Its trademark, consisting of the words "*Bantam Books*" and the portrayal of a rooster, is Registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and in other countries. Marca Registrada. *Bantam Books, Inc.*, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10103.

---

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

H 33 32 31 30 29 28 27 26 25 24



## Introduction



The phrase "history repeats itself" is not, these days, accepted without challenge. But even those most critical of the aphorism will acknowledge that certain events and chains of events bear marked resemblance to incidents of earlier history. It is, perhaps, less debatable—especially in contemporary America—to claim that fashions of dress repeat themselves. The sophisticated moderns who screamed with laughter at the women's styles exhibited in films about the twenties are, at the moment of this writing, flaunting the very same short, rhinestone-decorated hair and short skirts as up-to-date fashions.

We can also find this cycle in literary forms. In the heroic age, when time was found for entertainment, for verbal teaching, and for passing down of lore, the epic poem—the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, *Beowulf*—flourished. Later, the stimulation of Oriental models yielded the first European short stories: the brief, moral parable and the brief, immoral anecdote. With the passage of time, the epic gave way to the prose tale until, in the nineteenth century, it became the huge, multi-volume novel—*Vanity Fair*, *War and Peace*, *Les Misérables*.

The short story also came into its own during the nineteenth century; and, when the rush of the twentieth century began to chop away at the length of the novel—"no time to read. Get the gist of it in a digest!"—the short story became more and more popular and important as a literary form. Thus, the cycle continued and finally we rediscovered the "short-short story"—a tiny, highly polished gem of narration, more fully rounded and developed than the ancient parables and tales, and short enough to be completed in an afternoon or during one of the many short trips that have become an integral part of our lives.

What is presented in these pages is perhaps an ultimate in the refinement of the writer's craft. Notice, among the



authors, men whose greatest fame stems from large novels—*The Brothers Karamazov*, *Of Human Bondage*, *Andersonville*—but who, attracted by a challenge of a different kind, ventured into the Lilliputian domain of the short-short story.

ROGER B. GOODMAN

*Chairman of the Department of English  
Grover Cleveland High School  
Ridgewood, New York*

# Contents



INTRODUCTION	xi
A WEDDING WITHOUT MUSICIANS / SHOLEM ALEICHEM	1
HE SWUNG AND HE MISSED / NELSON ALGREN	5✓
SEÑOR PAYROLL / WILLIAM E. BARRETT	12
HOUSEPARTY / WALTER BERNSTEIN	16
HOW LIGHT BELIEF BRINGETH DAMAGE / BIDPAI	18
A PSYCHOLOGICAL SHIPWRECK / AMBROSE BIERCE	20
THE FATHER / BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSSON	24
NEIFILE'S STORY / BOCCACCIO	27
I SEE YOU NEVER / RAY BRADBURY	29
THE LOTTERY TICKET / VENTURA GARCIA CALDERÓN	32
DAUGHTER / ERSKINE CALDWELL	35
A WICKED BOY / ANTON CHEKHOV	40
LUCK / SAMUEL CLEMENS	42
THE CHASER / JOHN COLLIER	46
THE UPTURNED FACE / STEPHEN CRANE	49
A GAME OF BILLIARDS / ALPHONSE DAUDET	53
FEAR / RHYS DAVIES	57
THE RIDDLE / WALTER DE LA MARE	61
THE JEWELS OF M. LANTIN / GUY DE MAUPASSANT	65✓
THE HEAVENLY CHRISTMAS TREE / FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY	71
THE GHOSTS / LORD DUNSANY	75
THE SCOOP / JAMES T. FARRELL	79
✓THE BEDCHAMBER MYSTERY / C. S. FORESTER	82
MR. ANDREWS / E. M. FORSTER	86✓
THE TEST / ANGELICA GIBBS	90
TRUTH AND CONSEQUENCES / BRENDAN GILL	93

THE DISABLED SOLDIER / OLIVER GOLDSMITH	97
VIRTUOSO / HERBERT GOLDSTONE	101✓
HER LOVER / MAXIM GORKY	107
PROOF POSITIVE / GRAHAM GREENE	113
THE BUTTERFLY / JAMES HANLEY	116
ABSENT-MINDEDNESS IN A PARISH CHOIR / THOMAS HARDY	120
THE HOLLOW OF THE THREE HILLS / NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE	123
A QUESTION OF BLOOD / ERNEST HAYCOX	127
THE BOY WHO DREW CATS / LAFCADIO HEARN	131
THE LOST SOUL / BEN HECHT	134
THE EXACT SCIENCE OF MATRIMONY / O. HENRY	138✓
FARD / ALDOUS HUXLEY	144
THE WIFE / WASHINGTON IRVING	149✓
✓ CHARLES / SHIRLEY JACKSON	156
THEN CAME THE LEGIONS / MACKINLAY KANTOR	160
IF NOT HIGHER / ISAAC LOEB PEREZ	164
THE WILD DUCK'S NEST / MICHAEL MCLAVERTY	167
A TOAST TO CAPTAIN JERK / RUSSELL MALONEY	171
GERMANS AT MEAT / KATHERINE MANSFIELD	174
BORN OF MAN AND WOMAN / RICHARD MATHESON	177
THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER / SOMERSET MAUGHAM	180
THE GUARDIAN ANGEL / ANDRÉ MAUROIS	184
THE FIDDLER / HERMAN MELVILLE	189✓
THE PEARL OF TOLEDO / PROSPER MÉRIMÉE	195
THE SNIPER / LIAM O'FLAHERTY	197
THE CRIME ON CALLE DE LA PERSEQUIDA / PALACIO VALDÉS	201
HOW THE DEVIL LOST HIS PONCHO / RICARDO PALMA	206
THE STANDARD OF LIVING / DOROTHY PARKER	209
THE OVAL PORTRAIT / EDGAR ALLAN POE	214
THREE LETTERS . . . AND A FOOTNOTE / HORACIO QUIROGA	218
A DANGEROUS GUY INDEED / DAMON RUNYON	221
REGINALD'S CHOIR TREAT / SAKI	224
THE KISS / WILLIAM SANSOM	227
THE SHEPHERD'S DAUGHTER / WILLIAM SAROYAN	230
THE FOREIGNER / FRANCIS STEEGMULLER	232



TOM VARNISH / RICHARD STEELE	236
OVER THE HILL / JOHN STEINBECK	238
AN ATTEMPT AT REFORM / AUGUST STRINDBERG	240
THE THREE HERMITS / LEO TOLSTOY	243✓
THE DOCTOR'S HEROISM / VILLIERS DE L'ISLE-ADAM	249
THE BEGGAR-WOMAN OF LOCARNO / HEINRICH VON KLEIST	253
THE PHOENIX / SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER	255
SLIPPING BEAUTY / JEROME WEIDMAN	259
THE HOUR OF LETDOWN / E. B. WHITE	263
MOONLIGHT SONATA / ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT	267
GOD / EUGENE IVANOVICH ZAMIATIN	270
HOW GRANDPA CAME INTO THE MONEY / ELSA ZANTNER	272
THE THREE VETERANS / LEANE ZUGSMITH	275
KONG AT THE SEASIDE / ARNOLD ZWEIG	278

## ***A Wedding without Musicians***

BY SHOLOM ALEICHEM



The last time I told you about our Straggler Special, I described the miracle of *Hashono Rabo*. This time I shall tell you about another miracle in which the Straggler Special figured, how thanks to the Straggler Special the town of Heissin was saved from a terrible fate.

This took place during the days of the Constitution when reprisals against the Jews were going on everywhere. Though I must tell you that we Jews of Heissin have never been afraid of pogroms. Why? Simply because there is no one in our town who can carry out a pogrom. Of course you can imagine that if we looked very hard we could find one or two volunteers who wouldn't deny themselves the pleasure of ventilating us a little, that is, breaking our bones or burning down our houses. For example, when reports of pogroms began drifting in, the few squires, who are enemies of our people, wrote confidential letters to the proper authorities, saying it might be a good idea if "something were done" in Heissin also; but since there was no one here to do it, would they be so kind as to send help, in other words, would they dispatch some "people" as quickly as possible.

And before another twenty-four hours had passed a reply came, also confidentially, that "people" were being sent. From where? From Zhmerinko, from Kazatin, Razdilno, Popelno and other such places that had distinguished themselves in beating up Jews. Do you want to know how we learned of this deep secret? We found it out through our regular source of news, Noah Tonkonoy. Noah Tonkonoy is a man whom God has endowed with a pair of extra-long legs and he uses them to good purpose. He never rests and he is seldom to be found at home. He is always busy with a thousand things and most of these things have to do with other

people's business rather than his own. By trade he is a printer, and because he is the only printer in Heissin he knows all the squires and the police and has dealings with officialdom and is in on all their secrets.

Noah Tonkonoy spread the good news all over town. He told the secret to one person at a time, in strictest confidence, of course, saying, "I am telling this only to you. I wouldn't tell it to anyone else." And that was how the whole town became aware of the fact that a mob of hooligans was on the way, and that a plan for beating up Jews had been worked out. The plan told exactly when they would start, on which day, at which hour, and from which point, and by what means—everything to the last detail.

You can imagine what terror this struck in our hearts. Panic spread quickly. And among whom do you think it spread first? Among the poor, of course. It's a peculiar thing about poor people. When a rich man is afraid of a pogrom, you can understand why. He is afraid, poor fellow, that he will be turned into a pauper. But those of you who are already paupers, what are you afraid of? What have you got to lose? But you should have seen how they bundled up their children and packed up their belongings and began running hither and yon, looking for a place to hide. Where can a person hide? This one hides in a friendly peasant's cellar, another in the Notary's attic, a third in the Director's office at the factory. Everyone finds a spot for himself.

I was the only one in town who wasn't anxious to hide. I am not boasting about my bravery. But this is the way I see it: what's the sense of being afraid of a pogrom? I don't say that I am a hero. I might have been willing to hide too, when the hour of reckoning came. But I asked myself first, "How can I be sure that during the slaughter the friendly peasant in whose cellar I was hiding, or the Notary, or the Director of the factory himself, wouldn't . . ." You understand. And all that aside, how can you leave a town wide open like that? It's no trick to run away. You have to see about doing something. But, alas, what can a Jew do? He appeals to a friendly official. And that is just what we did.

In every town there is at least one friendly official you can appeal to. We had one too, the Inspector of Police, a jewel of a fellow, willing to listen to us and willing to accept a gift on occasion. We went to the Inspector with the proper gifts and asked for his protection. He reassured us at once. He told us to go home and sleep in peace. Nothing would



happen. Sounds good, doesn't it? But we still had our walking newspaper, Noah, who was broadcasting another secret through the length and breadth of the town. The secret was that a telegram had just arrived. He swore by everything holy that he had seen it himself. What was in that telegram? Only one word—*Yediem*. An ugly word. It means simply, "We are coming." We ran back to the Inspector. "Your honor," we told him, "it looks bad." "What looks bad?" he asked, and we told him, "A telegram has just arrived." "From where?" We told him. "And what does it say?" We told him, "*Yediem*." At this he burst out laughing. "You are big fools," he said. "Only yesterday I ordered a regiment of Cossacks from Tolchin."

When we heard this we breathed more easily. When a Jew hears that a Cossack is coming, he takes courage, he can face the world again. The question remained: who would arrive first, the Cossacks from Tolchin, or the hooligans from Zhmerinko? Common sense told us that the hooligans would arrive first, because they were coming by train, while the Cossacks were coming on horseback. But we pinned all our hopes on the Straggler Special. God is merciful. He would surely perform a miracle and the Straggler would be at least a few hours late. This wasn't too much to hope for, since it happened nearly every day. But this one time it looked as though the miracle wouldn't take place. The Straggler kept going from station to station as regular as a clock. You can imagine how we felt when we learned, confidentially, of course, through Noah Tonkonoy, that a telegram had arrived from the last station, from Krishtopovka. *Yediem*, it said, and not just *yediem*—but *yediem* with a *hurrah!* in front of it.

Naturally we took this last bit of news straight to the Inspector. We begged him not to rely on the Cossacks who might or might not arrive from Tolchin sometime, but to send police to the station, at least for the sake of appearances, so that our enemies wouldn't think that we were completely at their mercy. The Inspector listened to our pleas. He did what we asked, and more. He got himself up in full uniform, with all his orders and medals, and took the whole police force, that is the gendarme and his assistant, to the station with him to meet the train.

But our enemies weren't asleep either. They also put on their full dress uniforms, complete with ribbons and medals, took a couple of priests along, and also came to meet the

train. The Inspector asked them sternly, "What are you doing here?" And they asked him the same question, "What are you doing here?" They bandied words back and forth, and the Inspector let them know in no uncertain terms that their trouble was for nothing. As long as he was in charge, there would be no pogrom in Heissin. They listened, smiled knowingly, and answered with insolence, "We shall see."

Just then a train whistle was heard from the distance. The sound struck terror to our hearts. We waited for another whistle to blow and after that for the shouts of "Hurrah!" What would happen after the Hurrah! we knew only too well from hearsay. We waited, but heard nothing more. What had happened? The sort of thing that could only happen to our Straggler Special.

When the Straggler Special drew into the station, the engineer stopped the locomotive, stepped out calmly and made his way toward the buffet. We met him halfway. "Well, my good fellow, and where are the cars?" "Which cars?" "Can't you see that you are here with the locomotive and without cars?"

He stared at us. "What do I care about the cars? They are the business of the crew." "Where is the crew?" "How should I know where the crew is? The conductor blows the whistle when he is ready and I whistle back to let him know that I am starting, and off we go. I don't have an extra pair of eyes in back of my head to see what's going on behind me." That was his story and according to that he was right. But right or wrong, there stood the Straggler Special without cars and without passengers. In other words, it was a wedding without musicians.

Later we learned that a band of hooligans had been on the way to Heissin, all of them handpicked youths, armed to the teeth with clubs and knives and other weapons. Their spirits were high and liquor flowed freely. At the last station, Krishtopovka, they invited the crew to join them and treated everybody to drinks—the conductor, the fireman, the gendarmes. But in the midst of this revelry they forgot one little detail, to couple the cars back to the locomotive. And so the locomotive went off at the usual time to Heissin and the rest of the Straggler Special remained standing in Krishtopovka.

Neither the hooligans nor the other passengers nor the crew noticed that they were standing still. They continued to empty bottle after bottle and to make merry, until the sta-

tion master suddenly noticed that the locomotive had gone off and left the cars behind. He spread the alarm, the crew came tumbling out. A hue and cry was raised. The hooligans blamed the crew, the crew blamed the hooligans, but what good did it do? At last they decided that the only thing to do was to set out for Heissin on foot. They took heart and began marching toward Heissin, singing and shouting as they went.

And so they arrived in their usual good form, singing and yelling and brandishing their clubs. But it was already too late. In the streets of Heissin the Cossacks from Tolchin were riding up and down on horseback with whips in their hands. Within half an hour not one of the hooligans remained in town. They ran off like rats in a famine, they melted like ice in summer.

Now, I ask you, didn't the Straggler Special deserve to be showered with gold, or at least written up?

## ***He Swung and He Missed***

BY NELSON ALGREN



It was Miss Donahue of Public School 24 who finally urged Rocco, in his fifteenth year, out of eighth grade and into the world. She had watched him fighting, at recess times, from his sixth year on. The kindergarten had had no recesses or it would have been from his fifth year. She had nurtured him personally through four trying semesters and so it was with something like enthusiasm that she wrote in his autograph book, the afternoon of graduation day, "Trusting that Rocco will make good."

Ultimately, Rocco did. In his own way. He stepped from the schoolroom into the ring back of the Happy Hour Bar in a catchweight bout with an eight-dollar purse, winner take all. Rocco took it.

Uncle Mike Adler, local promoter, called the boy Young Rocco after that one and the name stuck. He fought