

On Watch

A/S J. K. Shillington

Light leap the white caps for the shore
And clutch the beach with long and desperate fingers,
Making one last attempt to grasp the wavering sand
Before they lose themselves to drowning.
And the flashing sails and gulls wield wildly,
Scissoring the sky with violent angles
And wind-weary arcs,
A geometry of dancing daring.
But here in the bitter-almond loom
Of this handkerchief space
All is quiet in the silent slither of the sand,
And I can not see one man from horizon to horizon
Along the beggar-beach.
The aloneness of one's self is strange and new.
I open my mouth and drink the wind—
Cathay, Persia, the Gulf—
And Siberian apricots.
I weave the sintered dream threads of my brain
Into a short, tense cloth,
One day in width,
One day in length,
For with such cloth
Is our loneliness shammed into the poppy times
And our death-glittered eyes bandaged into peace.
Oh, I am a fool!
I am drunk on mental wine
And escape my idiot's stairs
To find my feet in crawling mud

And my hands flailing in a grim sky
Among the crows.
And yet if in this place of exasperation and tears
I should find the golden smile of the sun
And the siren call of deep water
To bear my happiness for a day,
Surely you can not
With your hammer-handed time
Smash this healing idleness
Too quickly—
Too soon.

Dream Girl

Betty Monroe

THAT'S the girl," Jack thought. One in a million. Ruth McGuire. Ruth at the bookstore. Ruth, walking to Chem from the bookstore. Ruth in the Grill among a blur of other girls. Ruth—only Ruth.

It was as if a spotlight had singled out the dancing couple. Keeping his eyes centered on the dancers he stuck his hands in his pockets and shuffled down the floor behind the long line of disinterested "stags," trying to seem casual.

He had traveled almost the full length of the dance floor when he drew over to the side of the room and leaned against the wall, still watching. Hundreds of other couples were bobbing around the room and over the noise of dancing, scraping feet and voices, rose the high crescendo of the music.

He was close enough to her now to survey her critically. She had long brown hair that curled a little on the ends and straight eyebrows above soft gray eyes. Her figure was slim and supple, with long, straight legs. Tonight she had on white pumps that accented the deep tan of her legs and the familiar jaunty red and white striped dress.