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«Yes, you are,» declared Robert. «It is known as the wages of sin, modern version.»

And Rachel Glickstein, linking the arms of both men through her enormous ones, added: «Tell Henrietta to start a compulsary course on Applied Freud for all the young stallions in her stable.»

By Orlando Gibbons

Waiting for Joe

By DAVID H. JOHNSTONE

«Is Joe coming this evening Mother?» asked Michael staring into the fire.

«Of course» replied his parent softly. «He always comes on Wednesdays».

«Yes of course» echoed Michael. Two people waiting quietly for their friend, in the darkened room lit only by the flickering flames from the fire. The two figures sat silently, hating each other's eagerness to see Joe again.

Mary thought of Joseph with affection, tall and dignified Joe, Ex Naval Officer and leader of the Boys Social Club in the town.

She smiled to herself thinking how like her late husband he was. 'If only her husband had lived' . . . Oh how different things would be . . .

Mary glanced at her son curled in the armchair opposite. 'What good companions they would have been, still Joe had helped a great deal lately'.

But there was something wrong between Joe and Michael now, she sensed it more every week. But when had it begun?

Michael had always been a worry to her since his father passed away; it had only been two months after his death that Michael had been expelled from college at Cambridge.

She remembered the letter which stated briefly «due to an unfortunate affair whilst he should have been studying». What significance those words held Mary could never imagine. Had it been a girl outside the college? or was it another student?

She sighed in the gloom.

Michael noticed his mother watching him and wondered just what her thoughts were at that moment. Had she guessed that his eagerness to see Joe was more than just friendship? No! she couldn't have guessed that.

Suddenly tears brimmed his eyes as his thoughts went back to college and Francesco. What a beautiful friendship it had been. But so sadly and quickly ended. Thank God his mother never heard the truth.

Indeed it was good to know his secret was safe, also the secret he now had hidden in his heart, that he loved Joe.

He had known that he loved Joe ever since that evening last summer.

He had been standing under the elms watching the cricket with Joe and his mother when a sudden storm drove them closer under the sheltering branches.

Joe had held him close so that Michael could feel his heart beating faster every second. Joe had seemed reluctant to release him after the rain had finished and Michael had wanted to stay in his arms forever, but his mother was soon herding them towards the pavillion for drinks.

To Michael it had been a few minutes of heaven but what to Joe? Had he sensed the waves of affection that flowed from his young body?

*

Joe strode from the club smiling at some remarks he had overheard amongst the boys that evening. 'What a grand bunch of lads they are' he thought as he hurried down the steps.

Then the smile disappeared as he thought of the two people waiting for him. «Dinner at eight on Wednesday» had become a habit with him. At first it had been a source of pleasure to him in his loneliness but lately something evil had entered their relationship. The over acting of Mary, the strange smiles of Michael, what was wrong?

It had started last summer, he remembered that wild way Michael had clutched his hand during the thunderstorm. Was it just that he missed the company of his father? Every boy needed the company of his father during those teenage years.

He saw in his mind the two seated at the table, the polite yet strained conversation with a thousand hidden suggestions.

Mary was so sweet, so capable and always a charming hostess but there was something which didn't seem sincere. If only he could nail it down. Somewhere in that house evil hid, watching and waiting.

The wind drove the rain against Joe's upturned collar as he pressed on towards «Lilac House».

'Tonight I must finish my visits there' he thought as he stood in the porch looking at the fading paintwork. The house needed painting badly.

Still a house without a master . . .

With his finger on the bell button he suddenly felt afraid. It was as if a ghost had walked, passed him entering before him.

A bell rang somewhere in the house and lights appeared. Mary came towards the door, he recognised her shape through the frosted glass of the door.

Now it would begin again, the battle of nerves, the nervous glances. Oh God he thought, I must decide.

The door opened «Mary my dear» he murmured dropping a little kiss to her forehead. «Joe how nice» she whispered but she noticed his eyes were searching the hallway worriedly.

«Where's Mike this evening,» he laughed throwing his hat in the air.

«Waiting here» cried a voice from the dimly lit front room. Joe's heart thumped wildly. Suddenly he knew who meant the most to him.

«Mary my dear» he said, «let's sit by this glorious fire and we'll tell ghost stories before dinner.»

All three laughed together and settled themselves by the fire. Outside the wind howled as the spirits of old screamed their warning. But who heard? Joe knew he would be there for many Wednesdays to come.

Changing sexual morality

Quaker group's plea for tolerance

A report on sexual practice and morale, published today by a group of Quakers, «rejects almost completely the traditional approach of the organised Christian Church to morality, with its supposition that it knows precisely what is right and what is wrong, that this distinction can be made in terms of an