

# Book review

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Fred took Bud's coat and led the way back down the stairs and opened the door to the living room: «After you, Bud.»

Fred's mother, a book folded on her lap, was sitting beside the large, beautifully decorated tree that had been placed in front of the french doors, and Bud felt her scrutiny as he introduced and pardoned himself. Her face was kind, and, though it was lined with the years of heartbreak and sadness, it was a joy to him to see the deep understanding that existed between mother and son. He saw the personal magnetism and the love of humanity that age gives instead of takes, and he felt his heart going out to her.

«Well, I am very happy that you are here, young man . . . Fred is very choosy in his friends, he is always, always alone: if he has found you, then he must have found something special, and you are very welcome here.»

The evening went quietly between the three of them, and, more and more, Bud realized that he had, at last, after years of wandering with a heart filled with loneliness, found a home in which he could speak as he felt, in which he didn't need to lie anymore, and in which he could throw his arms around those he loved: around Fred, around Fred's mother—something for which he had hungered for so long—and a thought of gratitude came into his mind for the beautiful stranger in the bar. The stranger that was gone like a light but who led Bud to find the pure flame of his happiness.

Translation: H. H.

## BOOK REVIEW

THE EYE AND THE HEART, by Carlo Coccioli (Wm. Heinemann Ltd. 1960)

This is the long-awaited translation of «Fabrizio Lupo» a homosexual novel by a writer who has pondered for many years on the perplexities created by people plagued with a sense of not belonging. They struggle to attain the affection of a 'beloved' but there is a smell of defeat in the air, as society, the Church and, *au fond*, themselves, conspire to wreck their dreams and aspirations of acceptance.

The story can be likened to a sandwich with a factual beginning and ending, but filled with an indigestible pate, in the form of a novel, written by Fabrizio, an Italian artist, describing the phantasmagoric journey of The Child.

When Fabrizio meets French sculptor, Laurent Rigault, in the first passages, he gives up trying to sublimate his homosexual urges and capitulates to his charm, feeling he need seek no further. The backgrounds of Paris and Florence are filled with compassionate sidelights into the twilight world inhabited by men loving each other cynically, wagering sardonically on how long their little *affaires* will last. The suicide of the young American, Gordon, seeking his long-lost brother in youths who resemble him, is one of these pathetic vignettes. One longs to find that Lupo-Rigault will refute their destinies, but the agonizing debates, the love-hate and will to self-destruction becloud the entire narrative. The symbolism in the middle passage, which comprises one half of the book, has moments of great beauty and the landscape of The Child's journey is lit by passages of vivid imagery and insight; but it has an ambiguous quality which only momentarily illuminates the quest of The Child/Fabrizio for the perfect partner.

When one reaches the unhappy ending, there is a feeling that here is a creation which was imperfectly cast, although the matrix had the materials of a major inquiry into the theme of homosexual relationships.

Diego DeAngelis