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Oh, most anything, I guess. But I'll tell you who I think are the two greatest writers.

Tell me.

Rafael Sabatini and P. C. Wren. Percival Christopher Wren. He's an English writer. Do you know about him?

Yes, I said warily. I know about him.

Boy, if I could write a story like P. C. Wren or that guy Sabatini I sure would be proud. I should be mighty proud.

Yes, I said.

But I'd like to show you some of the things I've written, he said. Some of my experiences on Guadalcanal. I think you'd be interested in those.

Yes, I said, yes, I'm sure I would.

* * *

THE company band was crashing into action again.

Dance? said Sam.

I wriggled my toes. I was not quite sure if I still had any.

Sam glanced down. What's that on your foot? he said.

My foot? Evidently it was still there. I was glad about that. I felt relieved.

Oh, I said, Nothing much. Something I spilt on it at supper, probably. Nothing to worry about.

Well, he said, it sure has made a mess of your stocking.

Yes, I said, it has.

Well, shall we dance?

All right, Sam. But take it easy. None of that cave-man stuff, you know, no jitter-bugging. It's too exhausting. I can't cope. Besides it takes years off my life, and I want to live a long time.

Gee, he said, you talk crazy. But you're swell. Let's dance!

* * *

WE danced. I found to my astonishment that I could still hobble round. It was easier going now, the floor was less crowded, the tempo of the band had subsided. After all, I reflected, they couldn't keep up that fever pitch all evening. They were tender and romantic now. So was Sam. He nestled close and brought his cheek perilously close to mine. I edged away.

A moment later he was breathing down my neck, toying with my ear.

Hey, I yelled, lay off. That ear is mine.

He couldn't hear. The band was shrilling up again. It blared inconsiderately.

Whad'ya say? he bawled.

I said, leave go my ear and look after your feet. For pity's sake watch where you're putting them.

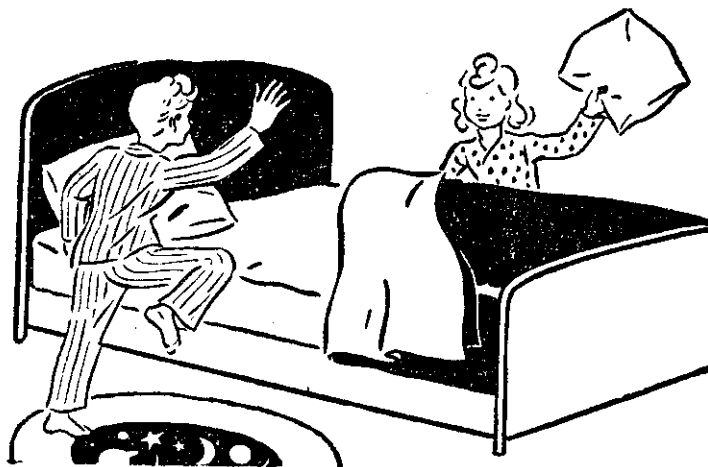
Oh sure, he said.

* * *

WHEN it was all over, I limped back and sat down. A nasty hack on the ankle this time, and the toes of my shoes irreparably scored by the marks of G.I. boots. But otherwise nothing to complain about.

Sam mopped his face. Right on the beam, he said. You sure are a cute little jigger. You don't dance half bad.

(continued on next page)



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