

## WINTER IN BARRACKS

(For Petty Officer Roy Gardner, R.N.)

FOR a week over dockyard, harbour and stone barracks

Stars as sharp as diamonds cut the sky's  
Black, evening velvet; outside all ermine snow and the tall clock,  
Luminous, but always late and full of lies.

In those short days you and I laughed together,  
Carrying into the Mess puffs of breath  
Purer than all our lives, this shrine of weather  
A prayer half-said between a death and a death.

At the Mess stove blossomed flowers of hands;  
Litanies of booze and women, shadows picking  
Our souls' pockets; or we felt the worn-out wintry ends  
Of cold town pavements under our footsteps clicking

All joy away, ugly even in snow.

I give you these few words for what I saw

In that brief revelation, and was still to know

When the world flooded in again at the great thaw.

—Charles Doyle

## Expanded Anecdote

LIKE many merely time-filling radio dramas, Elleston Trevor's *Mr Mysterious* seemed to me little more than an anecdote which, in the theatre, wouldn't have yielded more than a half-hour's Women's Institute play. A kind of poor man's *Brief Encounter*, it presented a married man about to spend a weekend with a cafeteria pick-up who is brought back to married harmony by the temporary disappearance of his stepson. Although I suppose one should approve the sentiment of such a play, its content and treatment placed it in the genus Soap-Opera, and I wondered why the NZBS had troubled to record it or, on the other hand, why it hadn't expanded it into thirty episodes for commercial use. William Austin and Davina Whitehouse went through their paces again, as the husband and his over-confident secretary. Among the other players, I was especially struck by Melanie Paul, who made of the other woman, Cherry, a more touching and convincing character than the script seemed to

draw. But would anyone who had a woman's magazine on hand have given up an hour and a half to *Mr Mysterious*?

—J.C.R.



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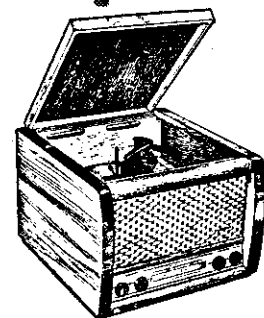


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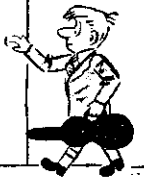
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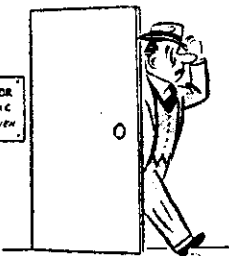
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