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Bertram Lippman

A FEMALE OFFENDER

OLA GRANDSTEDT was a woman from outside the State who was discovered by her husband in a small, well-furnished cabin in the green hills above the northern beaches standing naked over a bed on which a naked man was lying. She had shot her husband once, at the moment of discovery, and she was found in the conventional posture of dazed horror when the people of the neighboring cottages, having heard the shot (and having been not unaware of Mrs. Grandstedt before that time) somewhat hesitatingly entered the cabin a second or two later.

This happened in a year of which it would be exceedingly difficult to say what the moral climate was. Public indignation at the wave of killings was not at a low ebb, but it certainly was not at a high one, either because of the metaphoric unnaturalness of such a thing, or because no newspaper editor had announced that it was. It was a year in which the varieties of murder were so numerous, and so diverse, that it may have been just these attributes which made it difficult for any agency to become aroused and demand a halt. Given this ecology, it would be hard to discover why the case of Ola Grandstedt should have survived in the newspapers any longer than the other assassinations of its time and place. Banality and classic exemplariness are at certain points differentiated only by style: esthetically, not morally; and possibly it will be established by the weight of criticism that the killing of Ola Grandstedt's husband was archetypal and cathartic. To some who considered the affair at the time it may have seemed that its attractiveness was due to the fluorescent image it let loose on men's minds of Ola's white body standing by the bed in that honest, frank and business-like pose, an ideograph frequently re-

iterated and referred to from the time she was discovered until it was all over. There was probably secret admiration in it. A nation much less furtive about its murders than it is about its sexual demeanor would be likely to respect a woman who had the equipoise to stand about in her 34-year-old skin doing who knows what with assurance and manner before going up to have exogamous union—and before shooting her husband. It is safe to guess, also, that to the busy citizens who followed Ola's career she represented never their own wives but invariably their neighbor's; and they themselves took the place in the bed of her all but anonymous lover, in imagination looking up at her with a bold, appraising virility they seldom achieved in the dim ineptitude of their actual lives. Ola was the center of the picture. All the rest was obscure. Ola dominated the scene, sexually and homicidally; and in both ways, of course, she was *à la mode*, as with inceding luminosity she moved toward the bed on which all of us were waiting in spasms of virginal diffidence for her to come and work her will upon us.

So much for psychiatry, sociology, and art. When Ola was had up for murder she explained to the court that her husband had been an adulterer; that he had on numerous occasions threatened her with violence, for no sane reason; that she had had to keep a gun handy to protect herself from his rages; that she loved her husband dearly and worked hard to help make his medical practise a success; that she had suffered a temporary cessation of consciousness, making precise recollection difficult; that she had always wanted children, but for her husband's sake had never had any; that there was something sinister and debased in the uses to which he put his medical knowledge of the female organism, something she could only hint at, but could never describe; and that she would give anything if this had not happened, but now that it had, she saw clearly that it had been inevitable. This realistic defense would probably have been sufficient, but just in case it might not have been, every time a witness was called, on either side, the testimony seemed to include inevitably a reference to

the defendant standing naked at the bed, and the State was helpless. Her sentence was one to five years in the new prison at Massamoche.

After the usual last pictures of Ola passing through the gates of the prison, on her white, inexpressive face a Christian look of forgiving sorrow, even she could not hold her place in the news. Other murders, or similar murders of other persons, had quickly taken place, and Ola's plasmic vision had almost entirely faded when I got up to Massamoche to fulfill the terms of my fellowship, just as Ola arrived in accordance with the terms of hers.

I had been working on a newspaper with traditions. It was sixty-one years old, independent, Republican, and conscious of its public responsibilities. Its editor was also its general manager, the continuator and creator of its policies, and a collector of bright young persons, all of whom had satisfied him that they had felt the vocation to journalism while still in the crib, and who were all firmly branded as being "able to write." In my case I think it may have been a rather ostentatiously overt taste for the company of porters, mechanics and printers, and an easy way of getting on with women, that, reflected from the presbyopia of the Editor as social-mindedness, got me sent to the State Prison for Women under the terms of the fellowship to do a series on the newest advances in penology.

There is a kind of procrustean adaptability in youth that is quite different from the slavish, beaten opportunism of middle age. In spite of my views on penology, or on any other ignorant meddling in human affairs, I was as capable as any of my colleagues of writing the required articles. Maybe the 'Old Man' knew that, although at 26 I was altogether certain he suspected very little of the great complexity of my mind, of its tough morality, its purifying and ennobling cynicism, its foreknowledge of life, and its ultimate high purpose. Or possibly he suspected more of the truth of these characteristics than I did. A modern newspaper has a way of getting what it wants of its people, as much as a large corporation, or a university. Whatever reservations I

may have had for the future, I knew, without being told, what articles to write. The Editor was telling the subscribers, in advance, what they were going to learn from the articles, with a front-page spread:

For fourteen months an unheralded experiment has been going on at Massamoche, the State's new prison for women. It is an experiment in human lives, an experiment that may eventually change the centuries-old concept of incarceration and punishment to a new one—the modern ideal of reclamation, redemption and readmission to society. At Massamoche some of the most notorious female criminals of our time, and	many of the unknown ones, the small fry, the maladjusted, victims of their environment, of their families, their husbands, their lovers, all these are being led back to the world of usefulness and acceptance. How this revolution is being accomplished will be described by Staff Reporter Milan Farkas, 20th-Century Fellowship winner, who will spend the next three weeks at Massamoche watching the experiment work. He will see. . . .
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I found Massamoche a beautiful place, a green, woody shelf of land overlooking an even greener valley about a thousand feet below, and itself turreted by high, purple-green mountains. It had been very adroitly picked to sharpen the mood of a young man ready for three weeks in a women's prison. That may have been the reason I hardly noticed the twelve-foot-high walls of flat yellow brick all around, or the pugnacious modernism of the buildings, all glass and horizontals and pink-and-ochre stonework. I did notice the guard at the gate, though, a worn-out hack of about 60 with a pistol and a badge and a mean, sick look on his face. He read my credentials and made a call from a sentry-box camouflaged to look like a gate-keeper's lodge. Then he directed me past a tower almost hidden on the near side by tall trees, and along a path lined faithfully if unimaginatively with seasonal flowers whose methodical sweetness seemed an absurd disavowal of all the autochthonous grandeur.

The Warden's house I found where the guard had said it would be, at the top of a mound of pathless, impeccable lawn. It was in ranch-type modern, nothing but wood and discords; it would

clearly be full inside of pastels, rigid impracticalities and magazine notions. I was right. And the Warden himself was like the wardens in the movies: over fifty, business suit, firm, intelligent manner, good speech. In the first few minutes of my introductory visit it transpired he had no theories or attitudes about liquor, but drank it and served it naturally and freely. He told me he had been Warden since the opening more than a year before; he had never been at a prison where reporters were invited to stay as guests, but it had been arranged at the Capital without his prior knowledge, and he was getting used to the fact that things like that were always happening around here (I inferred he would never get used to the things themselves); and he said flatly he was there to keep order—to see that the inmates stayed in—and I could get the rest of it from the office of the psycho-penologist, Miss de Monk. I had never seen a man use so much of his strength and will power to keep himself under control. His name was Harrington. He was a good man.

Miss de Monk was glad to see the fellowship winner-reporter. I had met her before under other names, in hospitals and such types of bienfaisance, and I recognized her at once. She was a worker in souls, gaudy with esoteric degrees, an administrator recognized and paid, a professional in the sense that a ballplayer is a professional, and as much in her way a child of the age as Ola Grandstedt was. And it was Ola Grandstedt I was thinking of as Miss de Monk with satisfaction told me about the new penology. I was not analytically conscious of what she was saying, but I recalled it all later as I heard it evangelized by Miss Oxendine, Myrtis Oxendine, who was to be my Athena during the next three weeks. Miss de Monk introduced us and then left us alone.

A peculiar confusion, a tension on two planes, can arise in the viewpoint and behavior of a young man named Farkas toward a young woman named Oxendine. As I looked at Myrtis I was conscious mainly of her name and of her appearance of assured competence. Because of her name, with its connotation for me of those virtues of independence and of pioneering perspicacity

which, exercised by men and women with names like hers, had built this country, I saw her as admirable and right. These blooded characteristics I instantly assumed to belong to her, in spite of what I took for granted as my superior sophistication and intelligence; and I can only conjecture that I did so because of my typical education, my foreign-born parents, my early impoverishment and my hereditary religion. I was still to learn how old my country had got. If I was training myself to be an American, Myrtis, I found afterward, had reverted to her European forbears. I learned all that later. At first I noticed only that she was young, thin and cleanly, and she had no obvious physical peculiarities that might have deterred me.

"How much do you know about modern penology?" Myrtis asked me impersonally.

"Nothing at all, I guess." I was on the plane of the gentlemanly serious, and furthermore I did have to know what was going on if I were to write my articles. "That's why I'm here. And why you're here. To teach me. I thought we might get at the whole subject easiest if I did a case history, I think you call them. They make good reading, and besides—"

"You can't tell much from these women's backgrounds," Myrtis said.

I thought this was strange. Wasn't the past, even the un-lived past, supposed to tell everything about the present?

"To begin with, the facts wouldn't do you much good without the skills to interpret them," Myrtis said confidently. I was looking for the inevitable signs that she was charmed by my looks and my style; it discomfited me somewhat that she seemed more impressed with her science.

"Skills?"

"Skills. Techniques. You have to know WHY a woman deviated from her societal norm before you can treat her individual case. If you just read their records you would think they were all 'bad' naturally. I mean you wouldn't see any real difference in the motivation of their behavior."

"I was afraid you'd say I would find them all basically good, and just victims of society."

"Those terms are meaningless," said Myrtis. "When they are sent up here to be treated they are also 'victims of society.' "

For they know not what they are saying. I wondered in which one of her "courses" Myrtis had acquired that. She said, "It's all the same society. Society is where and when we live. Nobody can escape that, or blame it, either. You'll see for yourself. I just want you to understand that modern penological science is just that—a science."

"When did it become a science?" I asked this question as blandly as I could, and Myrtis seemed to receive it that way.

"Well, it grew up gradually," she said. "We've learned to correct the errors in the thinking of forty years ago." Forty years ago to Myrtis represented the hindermost limits of modern civilization. She could see no reason for trammeling herself with consideration of primitives before that time.

"You mean the penologists of those days were wrong and you are right?"

"I mean they didn't know as much as we do now."

"What about the men of a hundred fifty years ago? Four hundred? Two thousand?"

"I don't understand what you're getting at," Myrtis said with some coldness. "There never was a science of penology, until now."

"Who installed it in this prison?"

Curiously, Myrtis seemed not to have learned this or to have thought about it, and I didn't press it.

The next day Miss de Monk herself reviewed the progress we had made. She said, "I'm sure Miss Oxendine has told you the basic concept of our work here, Mr. Farkas. I'm very anxious for you to have it precisely right in your paper. We need the world's good opinion of us." She said this in the tone of one who is absolutely certain she already has it; and if she doesn't, so much the worse for the stupid world. "Our fundamental theory—it's really

more than a theory, it's a scientific hypothesis—is that here in Mas-samoche we will let our inmates have a taste of the better life. They will be surrounded by beauty and culture; and cultivated persons, who are also highly skilled, will always be present to guide and counsel them. If they can once see the fullness and value of another kind of life than they have known, it is our hope and conviction that they will not revert to their former behavior patterns. We intend to spoil them for vice, Mr. Farkas," she said in peroration, without a smile. "Nothing like this has ever been done before."

I made the mistake of saying I had the impression the new criminology did not acknowledge the existence of crime. Although I tried to make this observation as helpfully disingenuous as possible, Miss de Monk was not diverted.

"Crime is a legal definition," she said. "We have no quarrel with crime from that standpoint. It's the causes of what is crime that we are concerned with; but mainly it's the prevention of criminality, the elimination of recidivism. We acknowledge crime, but not criminals."

The merely sententious did not satisfy Miss de Monk. I was a broken reed when Myrtis took me away from this to more tangible things as we made a tour of the accommodations and examined an unoccupied "suite."

"I heard the bathrooms were orchid," I said to her. "Doesn't this green one seem a concession to past thinking?"

"The swimming pool IS orchid," Myrtis said, "but the bathrooms are in different colored tiles. This one happens to be jade. A couple of them are in polished granite, one pink, one black."

"How do you decide which guests are assigned to which bathrooms?"

"We don't. These suites each hold four women. There are eighty suites. About twenty-five or thirty different professional designers did them. I hope you'll get to see them all while you're here."

"You disappoint me," I said to Myrtis. "I thought the sci-

ence of penology had got farther along than this indiscriminate assigning of suites. What of the needs of the individual personality?"

But the fact is I was impressed in spite of myself. There were four beds in the room, artfully placed for variety. The room was about 35 by 25 feet, with a sort of large alcove at one end furnished as a sitting room. It held some books and magazines, a sofa, end tables, a couple of large chairs, a hassock, a fireplace (but no fire) and a coffee table.

"I will admit," Myrtis was saying in a tone which I began to think might be an imitation of my own, while I read the title upside down of a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, "that there is a good deal of compromise here. You know, we haven't quite been able to overcome all the old ideas of institutionalism, of prison. It was originally planned to give each girl in the group of four a room of her own, off a central sitting room. The individual, particularly in the modern world, needs privacy, to think, to be with himself. He needs a retreat from the pressures and demands of his environment. But then I suppose we were lucky to get this much."

She noticed I was examining an unframed oil painting on a wall of the sitting room. "Do you object to the lack of a pretty frame?" she asked. "We hang them that way to make the girls conscious of the art instead of the furniture."

I wondered who had armed Myrtis with this notion, and I was becoming increasingly aware of a force behind it all somewhere, emanating from some central point, some investiture, possibly a university, but more likely an American Society for the Advancement of Experimental Penology, with a periodical and a Board of Directors. The "we" of Myrtis' remarks must be they, or something like them.

"Is this by any chance an original Roualt?" I asked her.

"Of course. That is, I don't know who the artist is, but I do know it's genuine. All those paintings are."

"All which paintings?"

"We always have about thirty or forty scattered around the buildings. We borrow them from three or four museums, and we change them regularly, like a library."

"Who selects them—Miss de Monk?"

"Oh, no. The museum people."

"Aren't you afraid they'll be stolen?" I asked her.

"Of course not," Myrtis said.

"Well then, don't you *hope* they will be? I mean," I added, as I felt her stiffen with incomprehension, "isn't it really your aim to have the girls learn so much about art that they'll recognize the value of the paintings and—"

"These women are not all thieves," Myrtis said firmly. "In fact, most of them aren't. I wish you would please stop thinking of them as the underworld or organized crime or some such thing."

Since we were each interested for various reasons in keeping the other's good will, we ended this line of discussion by tacit stipulation. I asked to see the rest of the institution, and Myrtis guided me. We caught up with the prisoners at lunch. Myrtis and I had a small table in the refectory, which was more like a large suburban tea room, all chintz and tendrils and sun-filtering curtains. The girls did not wear "prison garb." Myrtis told me that prison uniforms were a relic of the past, or something equivalent. The women were instead required to wear their own clothes, or encouraged to make them in the workshops, subject to guidance and counseling by the penologists. Quiet good taste was the desideratum. The waitresses, likewise, had no uniforms, not even waitresses' uniforms. They were called hostesses, and wore little tea aprons over their dresses. Was this to teach the girls equality? I asked Myrtis, but she said no, it was for the purpose of having the women learn gracious living, so that they would aspire to it "outside." Who were selected as hostesses? None. They chose this work themselves on entering, guided by the facts of science and counseled by the penologists, and kept at it all through their term. "I guess the tips are not much," I said, "women never tip

much"; but Myrtis seemed to take this as a joke, a poor one, and ignored it.

We ate the lunch of the day, curried lamb, orange salad, layer cake, the same served the women and the staff. I wondered what Warden Harrington was eating in his sanctuary, while I looked around for Ola Grandstedt, the only "celebrity" I could recall for the moment. Either I was unable to recognize Ola clothed, so great is the power of the imagination, or she wasn't there. I finally asked Myrtis about her.

"We're not supposed to distinguish among the incarcerated by their past lives," Myrtis said canonically. "Each of these women is being recreated, separated completely from her former life. Anyway, Mrs. Grandstedt won't join the others for three or four more days."

"Why not?" I asked. "Decontamination? Or indoctrination?" I restrained myself from trying out something along the lines of "re-endocrination."

"I don't know what you mean," Myrtis said. "She is undergoing a series of tests, so that her true psychological norm may be ascertained. We want to understand her motivations, and we want her to understand herself."

Let me admit here to a mixture of styles. I had not come to Massamoche prepared for Myrtis' apostleship (although for conflicting reasons I found it very convivial to my mind) and I was constantly having to remember to damp my sarcasm. On the other hand, I did have a job to do, and every intention of doing it, and of doing it just the way it was expected to be done. Then finally there was Myrtis herself. It began by my needing her friendly admiration: she was almost my age and we were together a lot. And to my snobbish lack of discrimination (I was very young at 26), fooling with Myrtis was as natural and inevitable as growing older. So I was continually saying something diffidently iconoclastic, then withdrawing with a laugh, and later with a friendly, reassuring hug, and finally, after three days, while we were sitting in her car outside the walls, with a deep look into her

eyes and then of course a long, eutectic kiss, precisely the sort I would have expected Myrtis to insist on.

But I was wrong again about her. If she had expected a kiss full of meaning, it was not the meaning I thought of. When I was writing up my notes the evening of the day after this first embrace I suddenly found myself letting out a long breath of released tension and of the impact of full awareness. How had Myrtis got that way? I had naturally thought of myself as quite care-free about all somatic diversions, and certainly much too evolved for any romantic nonsense. But Myrtis! I could feel the presence of a sheepish smirk on my face. Upon reflection, I decided it couldn't have been her brush with psychiatry or sociology that had given her this fierce clinical detachment. On the contrary, when we touched our bodies together in the car it was as if she had never heard of these recondite studies; and in a real sense, of course, she hadn't: she had merely got a degree in them. No, it must have been something else altogether. In the three years which had passed since I was her age the girls of America must have been learning something I hadn't dreamed about; or the converse.

Then, to square the sum of my confusions, she had said, in her most assured voice, "I don't want you to get any ideas about me." I recalled that she said this each time I got the simplest, the most basic, idea. So, baffled, I ended by having no ideas at all, just as she wanted it. I put myself in her hands, quite literally, to the apparent satisfaction of both of us. We would finish our observations of the new penology for the day and then ride up into the hills to discuss them. The discussions and the explorations went on almost simultaneously, but Myrtis kept them in completely separate compartments of her mind, and her enjoyment of the one never seemed to have the least effect on her orthodoxy in the other. She was 23, but in everything except her adjustment to getting on in the world, she was 15. And well indoctrinated. Even Ola Grandstedt left her free of any noticeable deviationism.

"How did Ola do on her tests?" I asked her.

"If you mean did she get a high mark, you ought to know better. The tests are not competitive. Her psychometric—"

"What work did she choose?"

Every inmate of Massamoche was expected to name a major interest, something that would improve her and keep her busy. Most of them chose subjects like beauty culture, pastry making, stocking reweaving or dress-making, and you could watch them in the shops, the kitchens or the sitting rooms, following their chosen careers. A couple of young ones were practising touch typing; two were studying together a manual on pre-natal care; one was a singer; several were permanent waving one another's hair. They all seemed to keep busy, at least while we were watching them. And Ola?

"She chose social work."

"That ought to be nice," I said. "Where is she going to practise?"

"I'm sure that's the very least of her problems," Myrtis said. "The important thing is, she sees the necessity of a creative outlet for the rest of her life. Why are you so interested in Ola Grandstedt?" she asked suddenly.

"Only because I read about her in the papers. And I was at her trial."

"Then you must know she was married to a doctor, and she is a very superior type of person."

"I know she shot her husband. And she wasn't superior to bedding down with a man who wasn't her husband. Maybe wasn't even a doctor."

"Really!" Myrtis said. "Since when has that become a crime?"

"I didn't think you felt that way," I said smoothly. "I guess you mean adultery is all right if you are prepared to murder for it. After which, of course, it ceases to be adultery."

In spite of my tone, something about this conversation offended Myrtis. She may have felt she was getting too unprofessional for a girl who had won her Master's in sociology; or she was unable to confront any possibility that Ola was not precisely what

the program asserted her to be. I was certain, though, because of her impregnable stand against my getting any "ideas," that she couldn't have considered these observations as any reflection on her own conduct; and in fact she soon permitted herself to be assuaged while we returned to the dispassionate discussion of penology.

Time was passing, and the Editor was getting ready to run the series. I was keeping up with the deadline by filing stories on the general aims, at first; then daily stories on the girls horseback riding; the girls swimming; the girls at luncheon, tea, buffet supper—with menus; the girls at dramatics, designing, fashion reviewing; the girls entertaining famous actors; the girls being host to string quartets and famous virtuosi; admiring famous art; in choral singing; in Five Minutes of Group Meditation as Prayer. All with photographs for later syndication. Having swept my camera over the scenery back and forth in this way, like a good movie director, I was preparing to let it come to rest on one incarcerated, and follow her career of redemption until the end of the series. With the concurrence of the editor and Miss de Monk, naturally this was to be Ola Grandstedt. On the eighteenth day of my internship I dropped in to see Miss de Monk in her "office," actually a large, graciously furnished sitting room near the Warden's office, to listen in as she interviewed a "returnee," a former inmate, committed for her second sojourn amid Massamoche's groves. Ola Grandstedt was there too, learning her profession and consorting with a peer.

"Why, Mr. Farkas!" Ola said. She looked up at me with her white soft face that had known suffering, and I, maybe recalling the Ola of the trial, felt a peculiar jolting of my masculine sensibilities.

"This is Bonnie Lee Pappas," Ola said. "Bonnie Lee, this is Mr. Farkas. He is a newspaper man who is writing about us for his newspaper."

"How do you do, Miss Pappas."

"It's Mrs. Pappas," Bonnie Lee said. She was about 17, years

and stone, and her southern accent was not of the Peloponnesus.

"I'm sure Bonnie Lee won't mind if Mr. Farkas sits in on our interview, will you, Bonnie Lee?" Miss de Monk asked in a tone that would have satisfied Mme. de Guermentes.

"Hell, no," Bonnie Lee said. "I guess if another con can sit around, so can anyone else."

Miss de Monk ignored this and said, "Mr. Farkas won't ask you any questions, Bonnie Lee. He merely wants to observe the process of recording. He's not interested in you as a person."

"Well, it's all the same as they done a year ago," Bonnie Lee said, not offended.

"It can't be quite the same, Bonnie Lee," Miss de Monk said, "now can it? You did spend nine months here at Massamoche. Didn't you leave here with a different set of values?"

"I guess so. What da ya mean?"

"Didn't you come to realize up here that there is a different life than the one you were used to?"

"Sure," Bonnie Lee said. "That's up here."

"Didn't you like it?"

"Like it? In the pen? Are you kidding?"

"You never seemed to be—" Miss de Monk for once had to grope for the word she wanted. I could see her mentally riffling through the lexicon of her profession. She rejected in turn "dis-oriented," "maladjusted," "insecure," "unintegrated," and finally said, without satisfaction, "... unhappy."

"It was O.K., I guess. I didn't expect to enjoy myself in the can."

"How did you feel when you found yourself sentenced to come back here?"

"How would you feel?"

For a second it seemed to me that Miss de Monk had somehow missed the particular academic degree that would have equipped her for a confrontation with Bonnie Lee Pappas. A little off balance, I thought, she tried once more.

"Now Bonnie Lee, if you didn't want to be sent back here, why

did you go right back to doing the very same thing that caused you to be sent up here in the first place?"

"What did I have to lose?"

The evidence of things not seen. Does a doctor lose his confidence in medicine because a patient wilfully dies? Miss de Monk had the faith of St. Theresa. And something more. When the interview was over she wore a look of completely triumphant vindication. And I have no doubt Bonnie Lee's record accommodated itself nicely to the scientific formula.

That evening Miss de Monk reviewed for Myrtis and Ola, as well as for a couple of other assistant penologists, the technique of the readmission interview, as I listened. She had assigned Ola to her first effort the next day, when another returnee was to be graded, measured, anointed and prepared. During the briefing process Warden Harrington walked in from his office. He was accustomed, if not indurated, to the humanistic, democratic, philogynistic methods of the new penology. He indicated that the exercises were to go on, and he sat down to listen, like a visiting school trustee. Ola looked at him in the same way she had looked at the jury, and at me the first time she saw me (and, I don't doubt, as she looked at the grocer and the undertaker and the taxi driver). I couldn't tell if the Warden's involuntary muscular system responded, as mine had, but his face showed no unusual expression except a certain disdain.

"Warden Harrington has not seen us do a readmission screen analysis before," Miss de Monk said tolerantly. "We must remember. . . . As you know, Warden Harrington, Mrs. Grandstedt has very wisely chosen social work as her extra-mural. It's quite true that social work is not precisely penology, but they are closely related, in that both have as their aim the rehabilitation of the individual. So I'm hoping myself to be able to start Mrs. Grandstedt off properly. She is making excellent progress. She has a real aptitude for the field. Tomorrow she is going to do the screen on a returnee herself."

"Physician, heal thyself," Warden Harrington said. I knew he wanted to say a lot more.

Miss de Monk would have answered him, but Ola looked into his eyes and said, "Sir, I AM healing myself. This kind of work is part of the process. I've just come here, but already I feel healed and cleansed of the past. I am sure that after I leave here nothing will ever touch me again. I am dedicating myself to others who may need me."

"I'm glad to hear it," said the Warden. "But don't you think, Miss de Monk, that a girl who's up here for nothing worse than prostitution, say, might resent being interviewed by a murderer?"

Miss de Monk was too outraged to reply at once, but Ola was merely hurt. "Sir," she said, "I am going on in the hope that the other women will understand that just as my suffering is greater than theirs, my sympathy is greater too. I'm sure they will let me help myself by helping them. We are women, you must remember, and our feelings go deep, very deep."

"It's not *your* suffering I was thinking of," Warden Harrington said. I decided then that he had an admirable imperviousness to the Ola-image, and I resolved to strengthen my worldly manliness in his pattern. "But if Miss de Monk thinks it's all right, I guess it will have to be."

He left without another word, but obviously quite willing to be provoked into saying much more. Nobody challenged him, and I followed him out. He looked at me without speaking at first. Then he said, "Is that going into the paper too?"

"Well, you know, Warden, there are still a lot of people who might like to hear about Ola Grandstedt."

Again there was silence. Then he said, "Just keep me out of it." Then, "Would you like a drink?" and I said I would. It made me feel virile, like the Warden, but I still thought of Ola. My attentions, by design and inclination, had now all devolved on her, and of course I meant to be present the next day, along with Myrtis and Miss de Monk, when the scientific process was begun.

But I was aware that it had seemed to me disturbingly uncharacteristic of Miss de Monk that she should have been willing to initiate a non-professional like Ola into the hard-earned mysteries of her profession; especially since Ola was not only declass  , but herself a patient, as it were. Still, I had not quite understood how far along the new penology had gone, up to the point where it was in danger of believing its own tenets. It may have needed only Ola, the protean sufferer dedicated to social work, the woman able to turn life to account. Life, and even Miss de Monk. Something may have told Miss de Monk this was true. She may have seen in Ola the instrument of her own professional apotheosis. She may have had visions of a clinical article, under her name, in one of the learned Journals, that would forever establish her reputation, and take its place as the classic exposition of the new penology. I am aware that this analysis of Ola's nostrification may not satisfy all the facts, but I have only one other theory to offer. The Ola incident may have been the high, bright explosive point of the great period of the science of punishment; the complete moment of fulfillment which happens once in every major field of man's endeavor, sums up all the significance, all the paradox, the essential quality, and then subsides.

At any rate, when we foregathered next day, Miss de Monk seemed as self-possessed and calm as ever. "Just remember, my dear," she said to Ola, "this woman is not as fortunate as we are, and not so well endowed. She seems to resent Massamoche just as much as she would any ordinary prison. When I heard she was being remitted here I tried to get Warden Harrington to prevent it, but he said we had to take the bad with the good. He is inclined to be moralistic."

"Can we think of her as a special challenge?" Ola asked.

Even Miss de Monk had some difficulty with this. As between religion and science, she had long ago made her choice.

"We'll do what we can, I'm sure," she said.

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wondering how Miss de Monk would greet her—"Glad to see you again"? "Welcome back"? She was very correct.

"Elizabeth, you know Miss Oxendine. This is Mrs. Grandstedt. Mr. Farkas. I'm sorry you misunderstood the meaning of Massamoche last time. This time I hope we'll get along better."

"I told you before, and I'll tell you again," Hudkins said. "You don't mean a thing to me, sister. Not a thing. Warden Harrington is running this pen, and why the hell he keeps you around, I don't know."

"Let's not discuss personalities," Miss de Monk said. "If you'll just sit here and give us your full cooperation."

Hudkins sat down, and Ola, sitting across the table, turned her white face and her look of dedicated humanity full upon her.

"My dear," she said, "how old are you?"

"What does it say there?"

"I mean, Elizabeth, you're quite young to have had such a terrifying experience."

"I guess I had it coming to me," Hudkins said equably.

"How can you say that being compelled to take part in a robbery where two men were killed was in any way your fault?"

"I didn't kill anybody."

"That's precisely what I mean," Ola said. "You didn't kill anyone, yet you're being punished for complicity."

"Not punished, no," Miss de Monk put in. "You're not here to be punished, as you know, Elizabeth."

"What would you call being locked up for two years?" Hudkins said.

Miss de Monk hesitated a moment, then said, "Try to make better use of the opportunities here than you did last time."

Hudkins didn't say anything. Miss de Monk withdrew into silent observation again. I looked at Myrtis and I wondered, for the last time, how it was possible she had not learned that it is the human being, the human situation, that survives, when the theories and the institutions are gone. I had tried to tell her that she was in bondage to a fad, an organized notion, and one that was

interested chiefly in its own perpetuation, its "professionalization." I might have saved myself the effort. Myrtis would be married some day, and out of it all, but she would always carry in her mind the unquestioning certainty of the science of penology. The universities do not encourage students like Myrtis to acquire a degree in a subject like penology by exercising skepticism about it. Neither do they encourage them to learn sinology, Longinus, Inca knot arithmetic. Mithraism, nor in fact anything that is not ruthlessly pragmatic. And they certainly do not give degrees in sociology for the things the edified heart alone can understand. No, the degree needed its Myrtis, just as it needed Miss de Monk. And as they in turn needed the degree.

I turned from these reflections to watch Ola continuing at her vocation.

"Now, Elizabeth," she said, "these men who forced you to go along on the robbery, who were they?"

"You asked me that before," Hudkins said. "Nobody forced me to do nothing. If it wasn't for those dumb cops I wouldn't be here now. And nobody wouldn't have been killed, either."

Ola recaptured control of the interview. "I don't want to go into the methods of the police, my dear. I know something of their ideas of guilt myself, and I know the horrible interpretation they put on everything. What we are trying to do, Elizabeth, is help you to see yourself correctly. Now if you'll tell us how you got to know these men, and which one of them was your . . . friend. . . ."

"The both of them were my friends. What have they got to do with it? They're in the can, ain't they?"

"Well, let's be honest, now, Elizabeth. Which one was your special friend? Which one did you . . . live with?"

I am not sure this was the interview in which Ola was being trained; but I do record that Miss de Monk did not interrupt; and she and Myrtis seemed quite as interested in the questions as Ola was in getting an answer. Hudkins, however, had her own ideas. She had been looking at Ola with increasing shrewdness.

Suddenly she said, "I thought I recognized you! You god-damn murdering rig! You think everybody is like you? I ought to kick that fat face right down your throat. Who the hell do you think you are, asking me questions about men?"

"And you, you old phony!" She turned on Miss de Monk. "With your fancy ideas about curing us. Putting that white-faced tramp on me as if she was better than I was. She ain't fit to be with decent women, let alone asking me those kind of questions. Does the Warden know what you're up to around here? Well, I'm gonna tell him. And I'm gonna get transferred out of here if it's the last thing I ever do."

Hudkins had pumped her voice up to the limit of its volume. I don't remember hearing Ola shout anything back; but I do recall her staring at Hudkins through this blast without losing much of her look of aristocratic, mortal compassion. She didn't turn to Miss de Monk for help. She just sat and waited for Hudkins to stop. But, since Hudkins wouldn't stop, but only kept hollering louder, Ola reared back and smacked her on the side of the face so hard that the noise of it must have reached the Warden's office, because he came running into the room just in time to hear Miss de Monk crying, "Stop it! Both of you! Where do you think you are? Stop it! Miss Oxendine, run and get a matron. Call the Warden. Oh, it's all a mistake. Ah, Warden Harrington—"

But the Warden had already grabbed each of the disputants by the neck and rammed them into their seats with a thud that sounded above all the other noises. Ola caught her breath, then put her hands over her face and cried rather loudly. Hudkins merely looked winded and relieved. Warden Harrington looked at Miss de Monk. He did not say "I told you so." He just stood and stared at her, one hand lightly on Hudkins' neck, until Miss de Monk turned and left the room. Myrtis followed her out.

One year later the afternoon paper in our city carried a small front-page story. "Ola Grandstedt," it said, "whose sensational

trial for the killing of her husband resulted in a sentence of one to five years, left the State Prison at Massamoche to-day after having served thirteen months of her term. Mrs. Grandstedt told reporters her future plans were indefinite, but that she was going into a career of social work. 'I am leaving the State,' she said, 'there are too many memories here for me. I am going to pick up my life somewhere else, trying to help other women like myself create a better world.' Mrs. Grandstedt said she did not plan to visit her husband's grave."