

["Take a look at this," says Mr. Botsford]

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Thursday, Feb. 9' "Take a look at this," says Mr. Botsford, thrusting into my hands an old and [?] discolored photograph. "You recognize any of them?" The picture is of four young blades of the nineties grouped around a card table in a bare room with whitewashed walls. A fifth young man is leaning nonchalantly against some piping which runs along one of the walls. [?] He is easily [among?] recognizable as the young Mr. Botsford, and when I tell him so he is highly pleased.

"The others are all dead," he says. "All but Charley Huxford. Know where that was taken? Over in the old Power station. That's George Grimshaw there with the black mustache, and that's Riley Marsh, and Charley Huxford and Ed Crouch. We used to hang out over at the station in them days. Play [?] cribbage. George Grimshaw come here from East Haddam to take [?] charge of the plant, and I went over there one time on a visit and got acquainted with him, and then me and [?] these other fellers got in [?] the habit of hanging around there.

"George was quite a boy. When they sold that plant to the big company it just about broke his heart. He [???) didn't live long afterwards.

"They put electric power in in eighty seven. Had two dynamos. They knew just about how much juice they was goin' to use, of course, they knew when the [?] Op'ry House was open, and they knew when the Congregational church was havin' a time and so on, and they was usually prepared for extry demands on the power. But one time, the

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Congregational church was havin' a choir rehearsal, and Woody [?] Maguire, he run the Op'ry House, he had some company or somethin' and he wanted to show the place off so he took 'em up there and turned the lights on. 2 “Wellsir, [??] the big belt broke over in the station, and the town was in darkness. I run over to the station and there was George [?] workin' by the light of a lantern. I give him a hand with the belt, we fixed it up with rope until we got it on, and George gave us the steam and away she went. We had it fixed in just twenty minutes.

“ 'Nother time I was over there and all of a sudden we heard this thump! thump! thump! in the cylinder head. And it got hotter than the hinges o' hell. Turned out that the big nut on the backside of the [head?] was workin' loose. That took a little fixin'. I remember before [?] we was through, there was a big crowd [?] of people lookin' in through the windows at us.

“Yes, 'twas quite a thing when they first put it in. I don't remember just who it was organized the company. Seems to me it was Fred Roberts a?] and [?] two-three more was in back of it. People used to walk over to look at the place and visit, long after it was installed. It run on DC current, with them great big wires, and the dynamos—and I remember an old Irishman come over there one time—his name escapes me now—and he took a look around, and he said: [?] 'Don't it beat hell how them little machines can pump kerosene all through town like they do?'

“George Beach made a remark like that when he first see the telephone. I suppose you heard that one, didn't you ? You didn't? Well, George, of course, all he could think of [?] was the speakin' [?] tubes they used to have, and I guess he figured your voice was supposed [?] to be kind of amplified till it got to where you wanted it. Anyway, George says, [?] 'By Godfreys them are awful small tubes for your voice to go through.'

“Yessir, we had some great times over in the old station. Once we give Grimshaw a birthday party We had roast [?] 'coon, and all the fixin's. Had Fred Roberts take him down cellar and keep him there monkeyin' with somethin' till we was all ready. Ed Crouch's

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mother fixed 3 up everything for us, and we brought over a long table and chairs from Crouch's house. And boy, we had us a party.”

Mr. Botsford replenishes his pipe, strikes a match [and?] and draws great clouds of smoke. [?] “When [they ??] the big company come in and they put the power lines through, a lot of fellers come here to work. There was the Atkinson boys and Turberg and a lot more, but them three stayed here. Turberg come down from Sharon. He had a team of horses he used to work for the Power company. Those boys all liked the town, so they settled down here.

“Frank Howd come here the same way. Frank was a calker. When they put in the pipe line for the new reservoir Frank [?] come here to work. And when they got it through they wanted [?] somebody to go through it [?] and inspect it and Frank Howd was the man. They rigged up some kind of a little go-cart with four wheels on it, and he shoved himself along inside that there pipe lookin' for defects. Went all through it. But he never found nothin' but a few tools. Some said they thought there was a dead Eytalian in there and that's why they sent Frank through.

“Frank married one of the Reed girls. Burr Reed's sister. I've told you somethin' about Burr before. He used to keep the meat market up in the center. Burr's old man was Chancey Reed, he used to walk along like this.” (Mr. Botsford got a?) gets out of his Morris chair, bent almost double, and hobbles [?] about his kitchen. (“Then he'd straighten up like this[,?] [And ???] when he met anybody. And when he done it, he'd give you quite a scare. He was over six feet tall. You see him hobblin' along the road, all bent like that and then when he come right in front of you, he'd straighten up and look you over. Used to scare hell out of the women doin' that.

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“He had a son was half-witted, used to walk just like him. I don't know if it was [?] because he had to do it, or because he thought it was the way people ought to walk, [?] seein' his old man walk that way.”

“Say I got somethin' here ought to interest you. I found 'em just the other day.” Mr. Botsford crosses the kitchen to the shelf on which [rast?] rests in honorable retirement his ancient square faced Seth Thomas clock It has been many years, apparently, since its days of useful service, but Mr. Botsford utilizes the spacious cabinet [???] for an [??] astonishingly large collection of miscellaneous objects. He brings forth a pair of brass-rimmed spectacles, [???] the metal greenish, the lenses rectangular and very small.

“I don't know who owned 'em,” he [?] says. “Either my father or my grandfather. But that's what they used to wear in the old days. Them spectacles has been in a play up on the Op'ry House stage. They come up here and borried 'em one time. They know I got a lot of that stuff.

“Nosir, it wasn't till just recent years that people began to wear the bigger glasses. Everybody used these kind once. My father wore 'em, but only to read with. And a funny thing about him, his eyesight got [?] better the last ten years of his life. He was able to read without [glasss?] glasses.

“My eyes was always good when I was a young lad. I could look out the Movement shop window and read the numbers on the freight cars. Not many of the boys could do that. But I was polishin' some verges one time, and lookin' for scratches on ['] 'em, usin' a bright light, and all of a sudden things began to get black. I told my father about it, and he give me a pair of old glasses he had in his drawer, and things kinda [?] cleared up. [?] Right after that I got fitted for glasses, but I never used 'em for anything but work. I don't use 'em now, except to read with.

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Mr. Botsford glances meaningfully at his clock. "I got to go down and see Barney Lynch some time this afternoon," he says. "Barney opened up [?] the blacksmith shop the other day for the first time this winter. He's been sick you know. He likes to [?] have me come down once in a while. Of [?] course Barney ain't doin' any too much yet, he's workin' into it easy. He's got a lot of work ahead of him, though. [????] "You wait till I get the car out, we'll go down town together."