

WESTBROOK PEGLER  
KING FEATURES SYNDICATE  
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Dear Mr Raynor:

Harry Storms brought me your story, ~~the~~  
~~other night~~. Goodness, that was so very long ago! But you were  
right in every detail except one speculation. Julie had not been  
at the opera and I doubt that she was dressed for any sort of  
evening occasion. She didn't go down into the wilderness with  
us men because, like most girls, she was wearing the sort of shoes  
that girls wear on city streets and of course they had rather  
high heels and would have been pulled apart in a ~~hurry~~ half-mile  
of that going. I was young and had been fairly athletic so, although  
I was not assigned to the story, I went along not only as Julie's  
deputy but as a reporter who is always a reporter where a story  
is going. I was then with the United News, now abandoned or devoured  
by the UP.

Payne's wife, Helen, a friend of Julie, had recently  
died after a long siege. They lived at Union City, N.J.. Phil was  
distracted and phoned Julie, who was one of his city-staff report-  
ers, night after night, usually late at night, and talked endlessly  
about anything, nothing, just to hear her voice and her gentle  
encouragements and memories of Helen. On this night, and I believe  
it was a Saturday night, and quite late, Phil came through with the  
news that the skeleton of this poor little boy had been found.  
Julie, always faithful to the job, said of course she would go  
and I, always faithful to Julie, as well as the job, said of  
course I would go where she went.

Payne wore glasses as thick as the bottoms of milk-  
bottles and was deaf. We set out in his Hupmobile, a 4-cylinder  
thing with solid wheels, from our apartment on Walton Ave., Bronx,  
at about (I guess) 2:30 and picked our way to the west shore  
by what means I do not know. There were no bridges then that I  
remember so probably we went down to 42d street for the ferry.

The road up river was fairly standard (a sort of post-  
or-coach road route) up to a place beyond West Point. Somewhere,  
we veered into a mess of slop where they were making a great ~~fill~~  
fill for a modern highway, probably condemned and abandoned ~~long~~  
by now. I had not learned to drive and I had driven with many  
mad men in France as a crpt with AEF but this ~~night~~ night I was  
in panic. At one place two crazy cars raced at us, slid around  
us on the frost, and went by, with another car chasing amid shot  
and shell. I believe these were early bootleggers but whether the  
first car contained cops trying to elude the booties or vice versa  
I had no means to inquire. At one place, about dawn, a covey of  
milking kine came around a bend, prodded by a voluptuous creature  
in a picturesque Alpine-Bavarian costume. On close inspection,  
this babe looked like the janitor of an insane asylum but her

*hey gotta*

costume was pretty and, what with the clank of the brass bells on the cows, the effect was persuasive.

I think I remember coffee in that inn by the road where some man had found the bones of the little boy. Huntsmen, in regalia, were about to set out for the shooting. One man, with a heavy foreign accent, ~~twirled~~ *ed* a little human skull on his forefinger and said: "Share, ~~dot's~~ dot's de kit; ~~de~~ ~~goots~~ pay de rewart!"

It was Julie who discovered a couple of small, metal fittings from the child's garters and deciphered the letters printed there. This, I think, was the convincing ~~clue~~ clue. Mrs Glass remember that she had put either garters or suspenders on Jimmy that last morning and, by running back down the line of inquiry, the detectives proved ~~that~~ *th* these were his very garters or suspenders.

I recall that Jimmy had been reported found in Panama and Rumania. In those days, ~~nomadic~~ nomadic gypsies, most of them English in the United States, wandered happily and, ~~believe~~ *believe* harmlessly but there was a belief that they, dark people, mostly, ~~stole~~ stole blonde white children.

I hope you keep well. You are not so very old. What right have you got to ~~retire~~ retire? On the face of your work you are better than most younger men of today. I am 61 and just a cub.

I thank you for your warm recollections of my wife, a great soul.

All the best to you, sincerely,

*Westbrook Puffer*

*He died in 1969*