

Go home clean
Stay clean
Come back clean

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
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Ember Days W-F-S
Fast and abstinence
dispensed at school

What Chance Has Bill?

His high school companions, the hatless, infected sinus crowd, with mops of well oiled hair called him Bill. The name doesn't fit him: neither does Willie nor William. Perhaps Will would come nearest.

He is still a decent gentleman turning sixteen. Forthright, frank, clear-eyed, clear-minded, hence clean living. No matter where the priest is, he'll come up to him. He was an altar boy for ten years, serving intelligently, promptly, without fail. The Church and the priest have helped him along the white road from infancy.

But now one begins to fear for him. If only he were let alone he'd probably move safely through the senseless years that lie just ahead of him.

On Sundays the high school girls are ganging him. One or another of them frequently sounds his name. This mention of his name is a little too frequent to be without significance. There is a note in the voices of these ladies that betrays much. Bill has eyes, a face, a voice, his hair has the wave that women latterly - as the movies show - can not keep from pawing over. It takes character in a woman and self respect and all the centuries of Christian decency to keep a woman from running her fingers through wavy hair.

There is reason to fear for Bill. Since women have become the aggressors, the pursuers instead of the pursued, it has become harder for him and his kind.

No man advanced in life has doubted that women have always been the pursuers. But they hid it. Boys and young men do not know this. But now the whole female pack is out on an open hunt. Few men advanced in years believed the fiction of the cave man, the woman and the club. Now the truth is out, the cave man is on the run, the cave ladies with their many spiked clubs are after him.

Women as pursuers discover themselves and their weaknesses to men. They destroy utterly one of their strong defenses, the fear, the respect men had for them. They have knocked out of man's keeping the sense of unworthiness which formerly men felt for woman, rendered needless man's humility in the presence of woman, which was a protection for woman.

They have increased man's conceit which is very bad for man (conceit knocks down his defenses), worse for woman, terribly ruinous for boys. When these last learn that girls are pursuing them, they are shocked beyond measure; woman falls in their estimation. It is doubtful whether life will ever restore them as ideal. Women and girls may learn this with horror when they discover how men and boys catalog them, how unbelievably hard and coarse are the names they use to designate them.

God knows what this change of role has done. And I know, social workers know, so do doctors and the police, so, too, do more than one heart-broken father and mother who have seen the lives of their girls and boys wrecked at life's threshold.

"The young girl," says the Catholic Herald, St. Louis, "is passing out of the world and in her place there is being evolved a creature young in years but old in worldly knowledge, who has lost, if she ever possessed it, the innocence and freshness of modest girlhood. The world and society are not gaining anything from the change."

-- I fear for Bill.

-- The Indiana Catholic and Record.

PRAYERS: Ill - Paul Kinsella's brother (septicemia); a cousin of George Bolger; a friend. Four special intentions.