

1966

A. Paul Sigurd's Decision

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Recommended Citation

Hall, James R. Jr. (1966) "A. Paul Sigurd's Decision," *The Angle*: Vol. 1966: Iss. 2, Article 3.
Available at: <http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1966/iss2/3>

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A. Paul Sigurd's Decision

Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Well, son, I don't think anyone *really* knew how he got it. Some said it was always his and that he was always there. Yet others said that he inherited it from his father. And many believed that it was given to him by an impulsive woman - the Hester Prynne type - who, being in dire straits, had to get rid of it. A few even said that he built it himself when he was a young man. Me? I never cared how he got it; the fact was that he had it and he was there. But I must confess I always wondered why, I mean with no boats coming into the harbor anymore. And did you know that he used to paint it white every spring? And that he used to put the light on every night? Every night it could be seen from the mainland. Going around and around and around. But why? No boats had come into the harbor for nearly twenty years."

Cover Page Footnote

Appeared in the issue: Volume 11, Number 2, Spring 1966.

A. Paul Sigurd's Decision

By JAMES R. HALL, JR.

*"What — what have you been doing?" he cried suddenly.
"Playing a game, studying life, or what?"*

—F. M. FORSTER
A Passage to India

Well, son, I don't think anyone *really* knew how he got it. Some said it was always his and that he was always there. Yet others said that he inherited it from his father. And many believed that it was given to him by an impulsive woman — the Hester Prynne type — who, being in dire straits, had to get rid of it. A few even said that he built it himself when he was a young man. Me? I never cared how he got it; the fact was that he had it and he was there. But I must confess I always wondered why, I mean with no boats coming into the harbor anymore. And did you know that he used to paint it white every spring? And that he used to put the light on every night? Every night it could be seen from the mainland. Going around and around and around. But why? No boats had come into the harbor for nearly twenty years.

*Peccavi. Man Is Dead. I am dead. A. Paul Sigurd is dead. The dying man; the dying man. / Lived his life in a frying pan. Too many stairs in this thing. Too many stairs. I go up and always must come down. Up and down. Incycleness. Even on an island it's here. Inescapable. Inescapable involclusion. Incycleness. Man's gray frailty. Fighting to get drunk on eternity while time plays bartender and every spring painting my lighthouse white and every winter it looking black and how beautifully thrusting itself into the hollow air. And yet how dreadfully. Revolving redundancy. Incycleness. Swim, swim, swimming in the sea. So clean but I must come out. And then at night my searchlight. Stabbing the sea. Maybe some day a ship. Maybe maybe maybe maybe maybe maybe maybe. Maybe. Maybe not. If. Hemingway said you could but Faulkner no. Maybe Godot. Perhaps. Maybe nothing. Nothing is nothing of nothing's nothing. Don't worry about it, they say. *Live* it. Cars and bowling balls and skis and radios and country clubs and governments. You know — life. Some plaster needed here. Terrible to rot away. Better quickly. Lighthouse, destroy thyself. No. It's with us. Lord of the Ants. The gun is there on the table. Dusty death. Hemingway said you*

could not thinking you should and Faulkner no. But Leopold Bloom's father . . . The gun is there on the table the gun is there on the table the gun is on the table gun is on table gun is table gun table gun gun gun gun gungungun — *Peccavi*.

Yes, he certainly was a queer old man. I mean, to live in a lighthouse so far, far away and deprive himself of the fruits of civilization. Cars and bowling balls and skis and radios and country clubs . . .

A Reality

Outside I see the snow,
Inside I find dissention.
There the green things grow,
Here is intervention.
Always cold winds blow,
Life is circumvention.
Ice pulls the branches low,
Man but a new invention.

BERNARD J. KILONSKY

Outside people walk,
Inside he sits alone.
There they laugh and talk,
Here no love is known.
Always will wing the lark,
Life is a way to roam.
Ice even leaves its mark
Upon a man's gravestone.

Outside sky is high,
Inside ceiling low.
There the mountains cry,
Here one does not know.
Always a lullaby,
Life we can overthrow.
Ice can beautify
Even pure white snow.