

Marriage

by Ann Bogle

The Clarks were the best part of childhood after the Catholics of the suburban Alano had eviscerated my past, as promised in their literatures collaborated upon and derived from William James by Bill Wilson and one hundred survivors. Not one of the contemporary modern people had enjoyed a glass of wine at dinner. All had joined Alcoholics Anonymous in their teen years to avoid partying. Anyone else who happened in had hit upon shale in exquisitely-laid careers. A little fine-tuning was in order. She walked in to men and women armed with pitch forks, not tuning forks. A fine-tuned fork grows to a pitch fork in seventeen or twenty-five years of sobriety. Life is gone after one's misstep through that door. All practiced abstinence. All obeyed the light. It said that every life was entirely befouled until the day each joined the fellowship. A cult is one thing; it defies common sense that a commonly educated person cannot escape cultist thinking and belonging. *That* cult, A.A., is girded by police, fire, therapy, hospitals, insurance companies, and courts. That is a lot of metal backing a game of tip the dominoes. I hope each earned his and her \$1,400 in kickbacks in destroying my one life. Life I define as what one has managed to create since its last destruction by outside forces. It might have been more than \$1,400 each except that I refused to check in to a hospital after the social assaults, despite my neurological inability to walk. There must be no other way to win. I remembered the Clarks from childhood the way one pulls a thread of chewed gum off the bottom of one's shoe. My life to A.A. members was a wad of bubble gum after its sugar is gone. The Clarks had introduced my parents to each other after their own golden youths, in time to avoid falling to community-initiated deaths.

