

"Lord," he said. "I've got to find one!"

"Are you sick?" I said.

"It's my wife," he said. "She's bad."

He ran back to the trailer. It was built like a cabin, with tiny round windows and blinds at the doors. I saw him inside, and when he bent down, I knew he was kissing his wife. Then he ran out again, pulling on his coat. He rushed around to the rear of the sedan and unhooked it from the trailer by pulling out the pin. Then he got inside and stepped on the starter. The engine whined and crunched but wouldn't start. His hair was wild, and his jaw was set. The car wouldn't start. He got out, slammed the door, and started running down the road. He was going in the wrong direction, into the sticks, straight out into the country and away from Denver. I don't know why I didn't yell at him. All I did was stand there and watch him disappear around the lake road.

I went back to the pier. When I thought of him running in the wrong direction for a doctor, it made me feel guilty. I couldn't understand why I hadn't stopped him. The little waves lapping against the pillars under the pier made the only sound out there; but after a while I felt sure I could hear something else. I listened hard, and then I heard it, and it was somebody moaning, and it came from the trailer. Louder and louder it got, so that I heard it above the lapping of the waves. It was a girl's moaning; it was that fellow's wife. It wasn't moaning from a toothache, and it wasn't moaning from eating green apples, or being kicked in the shins, or a sore finger, or sitting on a tack, or flunking Algebra, or losing a game. It was worse than that. It was all of them put together. When I thought of that fellow running the wrong way, I knew it was my fault.

"**D**AVID," the girl was saying. "Oh, David, come back! I need you so!"

That was enough for me. I knew how sick Mother was; I knew she needed Doctor Fenton, too; but anybody who moaned like that needed all the doctors in the world. I threw my pole on the pier and made a dash for the clubhouse at the Country Club. It was half a mile if you cut across the seventh green, and I was panting when I got there. Dad was a member, so they knew me and let me use the phone at the desk. I called our house. Clara answered. I was just in time. Clara said Doctor Fenton was just leaving. Through the phone I heard her call him. Then I heard his footsteps when he crossed the hall at our house and picked up the phone. I told him to come right away, and why, and where it was.

"I'll be there in five minutes," he said.

"How's Mother?" I said.

But he hung up without answering. I ran back to the pier. Doctor Fenton's car was already there. Through the window of the trailer, I saw him bending over. The girl was still moaning. I put my hands over my ears and walked away where I couldn't hear it. Down the road I saw someone coming on the run. It was the fellow in white knickers. He dashed up to the trailer. When he saw the doctor's car, he paused, out of breath. Then he rushed inside. I felt better to know I'd got a doctor for him after all. I wanted to hear what he'd say, so I went closer to the trailer.

He didn't say a word. Instead, there was something else. It was a squealy