

ONE-WAY STRETCH

By SB

John Thomas was a PO (and a credit to the nation)
And he did his stuff at X-port, just another three-watch station'
With a day off once a fortnight and a Sunday once in three -
Not a scheme to cause dissention, nor yet one to cause much glee -
And from time to time it happened that it didn't work out right
And he had to have his day off in the middle of the night.

His ever-loving Margaret, a true and loyal wife,
Found it difficult to work-in with this queer fact of life
For she never grew accustomed to this routinary breach
Which meant leaving home at supper time and driving to the beach.
She never failed to say to him, 'John don't you think you might
Ask if you can have a day off that is not at dark of night?'

He pointed out to Maggie that it wasn't as she dreamed -
That he didn't have a day off, but a day off that was schemed -
And the best laid plans of mice and men were prone to jeopardy
With a day off once a fortnight and a Sunday once in three,
But with women's deep logic she'd say 'John, you ought to fight
Against having your schemed rest-day in the middle of the night'.

'John', she always asked him, 'don't you think you could arrange
For a day off next (or last) week, thus to obviate this strange
Circumstance which seems illogical?' 'My dear' he would reply
'That week my APO is "off" - a good and loyal guy -
And, whatever you may think about my strange but truthful plight,
I must really have my day off in the middle of the night.'

As he drove her home to breakfast she'd say, 'Johnny, I am loath
To say more about this matter, but can't you and Sammy both
Have your rest-days off together and another pair come down
As on Suns., and Public Holidays, from Y-port, up the town,
Then we wouldn't lose our golf balls, if we played when it was light
And you didn't have your day off in the middle of the night?'

'My dear,' he'd answer patiently, 'you do not understand
We would not have that Sun. is Mon. through the entire land,
And what you simply advocate can't happen. How can it?
Now please go and cook some breakfast for I'm ready for my pit,
And on three or four occasions, when the winter's at its height,
I shall have to have my rest-day in the middle of the night.