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# The Sit-Down Strike in My Parlour

They came and they wouldn't go

Sutton Leaver



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(Head vs subhead)

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The sit-down strikers, — who sat down  
the other night in my living room ~~and~~  
~~had~~ had timed their arrival in its  
characteristic cunning. They came just  
after dark between eight and nine in  
the evening. All six arrived in one motor  
car so as to effect a quick and  
immediate entry before any one could  
stop them. <sup>(over)</sup> The result was that they were  
in, had slipped past the maid at the  
door, thrown off their wraps and had  
occupied the living room before any  
organised attempt could be made  
to eject them.



With little warning I could easily

have prevented an entry. My plant is

a large country house with a lodge

and <sup>and protects in the rear by a lake</sup>

and a drive-way. A heavy chair

stretched across the ~~the~~ drive could

have brought the car to a stop. ~~to~~

After that as it was noisy was done.

No chain was placed and there was

no tear gas in the house.



(2)

If it was there that I was summoned for a conference. They appeared to be, as I said, six - two men and two women evidently husbands and wives and two younger criminals, <sup>a grown-up</sup> a boy and girl, ~~but~~ quite old enough to be held legally responsible.

If now here began the difficulty. People who only know a sit-down strike from hearsay, as I am afraid is the case with even some of our judges, cannot estimate the practical difficulty of dealing with the ~~people~~ strikers. But any plain manager will understand by case. <sup>if an</sup> ~~if an~~ outsider would ask why not throw them



, he would say,  
 y all out. Your plant, is your property.

These ~~about~~ sit down people are just  
 trespassers. True. But you see I know  
 them; they were people that I know, just  
 as the plant manager knows, ~~that~~ has  
 worked for years with the leaders of  
 his strike. Apart from their presence in  
 my plant I had nothing against them.

One of our judges <sup>asked</sup> said the other day,  
 "Why not throw them out of the ~~nest~~ <sup>neck</sup>?"

Well ~~these~~ these two senior women were  
 in every dress and were  
 of the solid kind that has no neck.

If ~~they started the~~ they opened the  
 discussion, clever enough, by drawing  
 attention to the fine spring weather; ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> admitted



(4)

That it was fine but claimed that  
it still turned bitter cold <sup>later</sup> at night.

They denied this flat out. Then I  
made my first, tentative, offer, viz that  
they must have a whiskey or soda, or  
gingivale with ice, a choice, before they  
left. They <sup>agreed</sup> accepted but ~~without~~ the  
~~proviso in ~~stroke~~~~ without clause two.

For the time being, I was beaten but  
it occurred to me that in getting ice  
for the drinks I might make some use  
of the telephone to get home. The younger  
criminal frustrated this by coming  
to help me. While getting the ice  
he put in an ingenious claim that



(5)

He had been a student of mine  
in economics when I was a professor.

There was no way to challenge this.  
He may have been <sup>a lot of my students went to the bad</sup> ~~Dampson~~ <sup>now that I over lectured</sup>  
~~on Keynes~~

When I got back to the living room  
the sit-downers had settled in to their  
lark and were well-ensconced round the  
fire which they stoked to a blaze. They  
came out boldly with their first  
demand and suggested a game of  
bridge. I urged that I had no  
cards. But their preliminary organisation  
had provided this. It seemed that  
one of the women strikers had cards  
in her bag.



(6)

By ten o'clock the sit down strike was in full operation. The strikers were playing bridge, four at a time, with two as pickets to keep their eye on me. The system I believe is called "cutting in" and is large used in cases like this where a sit-down strike is carried on in a private dwelling. Of bridge I know nothing but it was clear that we had reached a <sup>rough</sup> rough & ready understanding, namely that they would play without further annoyance to the property provided that I ~~kept~~ kept up the fire and supplied whiskey and soda after each rubber. For



(27)

Those not conversant with bridge I  
may say that a "rubber" is the name  
given to the period between drinks.

If the sit-down strikes were thus getting  
about fifty cents an hour, which they  
raised to sixty cents an hour at ten eleven  
o'clock by ~~the~~ working states rubbers. I had  
to give in. One man made a distinct  
threat that if I didn't, they'd stay ~~at~~  
all night. What he said was, "I just  
feel when I get as if I could play  
all night!" but I knew what he meant.  
And when some of the women went  
over to the piano and hit a couple  
of notes, and I say "we want to go home"



(8)

till morning"! I knew that they  
might start violence at any time.

~~Once a time I plan~~

I repeat again that people who only  
think in terms of theory failed to realize  
how difficult it is in practice to  
fight against sit-down strikes. They would  
say, "why didn't you get one and use force,  
attach him?" <sup>kill him!</sup> I tried to. I got one of the  
men strikers, while he was picketing, and  
took him down to the cellar under  
pretense of fixing the furnace. But he  
artfully kept out of the reach of the  
shovel. Then I took him out on the  
lawn to look at the lake but  
I couldn't get him near enough.



(9)

7/ So then we came in I made a flat out offer of seventy five cents worth of whiskey, and a plate of sandwiches if they'd go, — that is, before they went to ~~Port #~~ But it only led to a lot of back & forward discussion. One woman said "oh yes, sandwiches would be lovely, <sup>1<sup>st</sup></sup> but ~~the~~ ~~do~~, let's stop a minute!" but the other said, "no <sup>many</sup> ~~may~~, we don't need to stop we can eat the sandwiches right here.

9 After that, — it was nearly one in the morning, — I gave up right in. I

knew there was a cold Turkey in the ice box, ~~and I know that ~~works~~~~



women

the real thing, - plump and cool and  
 lying all dressed <sup>up</sup> with green parsley @  
 Show that is a woman of ~~that~~ <sup>The</sup>  
 make and build that those were and  
 you've got ~~the~~ her @

If I beat them with that. Within ten  
 minutes I had them <sup>round</sup> at the dinner room  
 table with the turkey, - they had found  
 half a cold ham & a few other things &  
 claimed the lot @ We were acting on a fair  
 and square "gentleman's agreement" that  
 they'd eat all they could & then go @  
 . There was a little merriment, indeed  
 someone suggested a round of old  
 brandy at poker or something, but @



(11)

and one woman said that when  
she got going she could go  
on all night. But there was  
a general feeling that by offer was  
a fair compromise as they took it

if they made one stipulation however  
they are all coming back next  
Tuesday, and they are going to  
bring two others with them, visitors  
who are coming up from Cincinnati.

They say that <sup>these</sup> are "lovely people"

~~I don't doubt it~~, or don't doubt it

And <sup>they say</sup> that they are ~~to~~ just dying to  
meet me. all right. let them die.

if <sup>Friday</sup> Next ~~time~~ I'll be ready. TH



(12)

chain will be across the drive. John Kelly, my lodge keeper, a determined man who has seen something of Sinn Fein Ireland is a handyman with bind stool. And I have ordered ten gallons of leaf-gas

of Amstel, — oh, I don't know, — somehow we just can't! That's the bother with the sit-down strikes in social life. They'll

come and I let them in, — and they'll say "well! here we are again!" and one of the women will <sup>set off</sup> say that old

thing about the bad penny, and then say "I want you to meet Mrs Potzenjammer & Cruminate, as I'll say "what about a little catch" All right! Life is just repetition! — Shar