FLAMES

E WILSON DODD

e up-flickering, and the night
ightens; cold, still, pitiless,
s, nor changes. Cold,
less. Flame on flame
inst that cold, that silence.
ought against the night
ick from flintlike courage; men
toms, Tigris, Nile,
mud bricks, piling towers
hrs the night, tipped with pure flame;
ities crowning hills
and vain sacrifice;
ill, men of proud Rome,
lost in the night;
whose flickering candles,
e, one by one expire,
by the cold, still night!
ring, O my brothers,
dying fires
he thick cold pitiless night!
flame, who refuse defeat!
flickering, flickering flames,
; flames from tiniest hills,
ng against the night!

COUNTRY FULL OF SWEDES

By ERSKINE CALDWELL

THERE I was, standing in the middle of the cham-
ber, trembling like I was coming down with the
flu, and still not knowing what god-awful some-
thing had happened. In all my days in the Back
Kingdom, I never heard such noises so early in the fore-
noon.

It was about half an hour after sunrise, and a gun went
off like a cofferdam breaking up under ice at twenty below,
and I'd swear it sounded like it wasn't any further away
than my feet are from my head. That gun shot off, pitch-
ing me six-seven inches off the bed, and, before I could
come down out of the air, there was another roar like some-
body coughing through a megaphone, with a two weeks'
cold, right in my ear. God helping, I hope I never get
waked up like that again until I can get myself home to
the Back Kingdom where I rightfully belong to stay.

I must have stood there I don't know how long, shiver-
ing in my nightshirt, my heart pounding inside of me like
a ramrod working on a plugged-up bore, and listening for
that gun again, if it was going to shoot some more. A man
never knows what's going to happen in the State of Maine.
That's why I wish sometimes I'd never left the Back King-
dom to begin with. I was making sixty a month, with the
best of bed and board, back there in the intervale; but like
a damn fool I had to jerk loose and come down here near
the Bay. I'm going back where I came from, God helping;
I've never had a purely calm and peaceful day since I got
ere three-four years ago. This is the worst country for
the unexpected raising of all kinds of unlooked for hell a
man is apt to run across in a lifetime. If a man’s born and raised in the Back Kingdom, he ought to stay there where he belongs; that’s what I’d done if I’d had the sense to stay out of this down-country near the Bay, where you don’t ever know, God helping, what’s going to happen next where or when.

But there I was, standing in the middle of the upstairs chamber, shaking like a ragweed in an August windstorm and not knowing what minute, maybe right at me, that gun was going off again, for all I knew. Just then, though, I heard Jim and Mrs. Frost trip-trapping around downstairs in their bare feet. Even if I didn’t know what god-awful something had happened, I knew things around the place weren’t calm and peaceful, like they generally were of a Sunday morning in May, because it took a stiff mixture of heaven and hell to get Jim and Mrs. Frost up and out of a warm bed before six of a forenoon, any day of the week.

I ran to the window and stuck my head as far out as I could get it, to hear what the trouble was. Everything out there then was as quiet and peaceful as midnight on a back road in dead of winter. But I knew something was up, because Jim and Mrs. Frost didn’t make a practice of getting up and out of a warm bed that time of forenoon in the chillish Maytime.

There wasn’t any sense in standing there in the cold air shivering in my nightshirt; so I put on my clothes, whistling all the time through my teeth to drive away the chill, and trying to figure out what damn fool was around so early shooting off a gun of a Sunday morning. Just then I heard the downstairs door open, and up the steps, two at a time, came Jim in his breeches and his shirttail flying out behind him.

He wasn’t long in coming up the stairs, for a man sixty-seven, but before he reached the door to my room, that gun went off again: BOOM! Just like that! And the echo came rolling back through the open window from the hills:

**COUNTRY FUG**

_Boom! Boom!_ Like firewall shut. Jim had busted through heard that _Boom!_ sound he eyed weather vane, five-stone again like he had been shot gun. That _Boom!_ so early scare the daylight out of a differen from me or anybody. He just turned around and first tread on the stairway somewhere else in a hurry start.

I’d been hired to Jim four years, and I was near liking name, as Jim himself together, doing chores an, because neither one other do more of the work team, and I never had a kid either.

The echo of that gun hills and coming in through that god-awful cough-like soured again right there like it might have been. The man or beast or what like that had ought to be the women and children ach-comforting sound peaceful calm of the B early of a Sunday forenoo.

I jumped to the door leaped through. He did to it tom of the stairs. He stood around the corner of the ey cow moose surpris
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COUNTRY FULL OF SWEDES

Boom! Boom! Like fireworks going off with your eyes
shut. Jim had busted through the door already, but when he
heard that Boom! sound he sort of spun around, like a cock-
eyed weather vane, five-six times, and ran out the door
again like he had been shot in the hind parts with a moose
gun. That Boom! so early in the forenoon was enough to
scare the daylights out of any man, and Jim wasn't any dif-
ferent from me or anybody else in the town of East Joloppi.
He just turned around and jumped through the door to the
first tread on the stairway like his mind was made up to go
somewhere else in a hurry, and no fooling around at the
start.

I'd been hired to Jim and Mrs. Frost for all of three-
four years, and I was near about as much of a Frost, except-
ing name, as Jim himself was. Jim and me got along fine
together, doing chores and haying and farm work in gen-
eral, because neither one of us was ever trying to make the
other do more of the work. We were hitched to make a fine
team, and I never had a kick coming, and Jim said he didn't
either.

The echo of that gunshot was still rolling around in the
hills and coming in through the window, when all at once
that god-awful cough-like whoop through a megaphone
sounded again right there in the room and everywhere else,
like it might have been, in the whole town of East Joloppi.
The man or beast or whatever animal he was who hollered
like that had ought to be locked up to keep from scaring all
the women and children to death, and it wasn't any stom-
ach-comforting sound for a grown man who's used to the
peaceful calm of the Back Kingdom all his life to hear so
early of a Sunday forenoon, either.

I jumped to the door where Jim, just the minute before,
leaped through. He didn't stop till he got clear to the bot-
tom of the stairs. He stood there, sticking his frazzled head
around the corner of the door, looking up at me like a wild-
eyed cow moose surprised in the sheriff's corn field.
THE YALE REVIEW

"Who fired that shot, Jim?" I yelled at him, leaping down the stairs quicker than a man of my years ought to let himself do.

"Good God!" Jim said, his voice hoarse and falling all to pieces like a stump of punk-wood, "The Swedes! The Swedes are shooting!"

"What Swedes, Jim—those Swedes who own the farm and buildings across the road?" I said, trying to find the buttonholes in my shirt. "Have they come back to live on that farm?"

"Yes!" he said, his voice croaking deep in his throat, like he had swallowed too much water. "The Swedes are all over the place. They're everywhere you can see, there's that many of them."

"What's their name, Jim?" I asked him. "You and Mrs. Frost never told me what their name is."

"I don't know. I never heard them called anything but Swedes, and that's what it is, I guess."

I ran across the hall to look out a window, but it was the wrong side of the house. Mrs. Frost was stepping around in the downstairs chamber, lacking things up in the drawers and closets and forgetting where she was hiding the keys. I could see her through the open door, and she was more scared looking than Jim was. She was so scared of the Swedes she didn't know what she was doing, none of the time.

"What made the Swedes come back for, Jim?" I said to him. "I thought you said they were gone for good, this time."

"Good God, Stan," he said, "I don't know what they came back here for. I guess hard times are bringing everybody back to the land, and the Swedes are always in the front rush of everything. I don't know what brought them back, but they're all over the place, shooting and yelling and raising hell. There are thirty-forty of them, looks like to me, counting everything with heads."
E REVIEW

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COUNTRY FULL OF SWEDES

"What they doing now, Jim, except yelling and shoot-
ing?"

"Good God," Jim said, looking behind him to see what
rs. Frost was doing with his things in the downstairs
amber and bring in the cows and tie them up in the stalls. I
t to hurry out now and pull up and bring in all of those
ew cedar fence posts across the front of the yard before
hey start taking them off. Good God, Stan, the Swedes are
everywhere you look outdoors! We have got to make haste,
!

Jim ran to the side door and out to the back of the house,
but I took my time about going. I wasn't scared of the
ades, like Jim and Mrs. Frost were, and I didn't aim to
ave Jim putting me to doing tasks and chores, or anything
else, before breakfast and the proper time. I wasn't any
ore scared of the Swedes than I was of the Finns and
ortuguese, anyway. It's a pure shame for Americans to let
edes and Finns and the Portuguese scare the daylights
ut of them. God helping, they are no different than us,
and you never see a Finn or a Swede scared of an American.

But there wasn't any sense in trying to argue with Jim
nd Mrs. Frost right then, when the Swedes, like a fired
est of yellow-headed bumblebees, were swarming all over
place as far as the eye could see, and when Mrs. Frost
ared to death that they were coming into the house to
carry out all her furniture and household goods. So while
rs. Frost was tying hers and Jim's shoes in pillowcases
nd putting them out of sight in the closets, I went to the
itchen window and looked out to see what was going on
round the tall yellow house across the road.

Jim and Mrs. Frost both were right about there being
edes all over the place. God helping, there were Swedes
all over the country, near about all over the whole town of
ast Joloppi, for what I could see out the window. They
were as thick around the barn and pump and the woodpile as if they had been a nest of yellow-headed bumblebees buzzing all over the country. There were Swedes everywhere a man could see, and the ones that couldn’t be seen, could be heard yelling their heads off inside the yellow clapboarded house across the road. There wasn’t any mistake about their being Swedes there, either; because I’ve never yet seen a man who mistakes a Swede or a Finn for an American. Once you see a Finn or a Swede you know, God helping, that he is a Swede or a Finn, and not a Portuguese or an American.

There was a Swede everywhere a man could look. Some of them were little Swedes, and women Swedes; but when you come right down to it, there’s no sense in counting out the little Swedes and the women Swedes.

Out in the road in front of their house were seven-eight autos and trucks loaded down with furniture and household goods. All around, everything was Swede. The Swedes were yelling and shouting at one another, the little Swedes and the women Swedes just as loud as the big Swedes, and it looked like none of them knew what all the shouting and yelling was for, and when they found out, they didn’t give a damn about it. That was because all of them were Swedes. It didn’t make any difference what a Swede was yelling about; just as long as he had leave to open his mouth, he was tickled to death about it.

I have never seen the like of so much yelling and shouting anywhere else before; but down here in the State of Maine there’s no sense in being taken back at the sights to be seen, because anything on God’s green earth is likely and liable to happen between day and night, and the other way around, too.

Now you take the Finns; there’s any number of them around in the woods. When a Finn crew breaks a woods camp, it looks like there’s a Finn behind every tree in the whole State, but you don’t see them go making the noise that
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COUNTRY FULL OF SWEDES

Swedes do, with all their yelling and shouting and shooting
the guns. Finns are quiet about their hell-raising. The
Portuguese are quiet, too; you see them tramping around,
minding their own business, and working hard on a river
dam or something, but you never hear them shouting and
yelling and shooting off guns at five-six of a Sunday morn-
ing. There's no known likeness to the noise that a houseful
of Swedes can make when they get to yelling and shouting
at one another early in the forenoon.

I was standing there all that time, looking out the
window at the Swedes across the road, when Jim came into the
kitchen with an armful of wood and threw it into the
woodbox behind the range. "Stan," he said, "the Swedes
are everywhere you can look outdoors. They're not going to
get that armful of wood, anyway, though."

Mrs. Frost came to the door and stood looking like she
didn't know it was her business to cook breakfast for Jim
and me. I made a fire in the range and put on a pan of water
to boil for the coffee. Jim kept running to the window to
look out, and there wasn't much use in expecting Mrs.
Frost to start cooking unless somebody set her to it, in the
shape she was in, with all the Swedes around the place. She
was so upset, it was a pity to look at her. But Jim and me
had to eat, and I went and took her by the arm and brought
her to the range and left her standing there so close she
would get burned if she didn't stir around and cook break-
fast.

"Good God, Stan," Jim said, "those Swedes are into
everything. They're in the barn, and in the pasture running
the cows, and I don't know what else they've been into since
I looked last. They'll take the tools and the horses and
cows, and the cedar posts, too, if we don't get out there and
put everything under lock and key."

"Now, hold on, Jim," I said, looking out the window.
"Them you see are little Swedes out there, and they're not
going to make off with anything of yours and Mrs. Frost's.
The big Swedes are busy carrying in the furniture and household goods. Those Swedes aren’t going to tamper with anything of yours. They’re people just like us. They don’t go around stealing everything in sight. Let’s just sit here by the window and watch them while Mrs. Frost gets breakfast ready.

“They’re Swedes, though, Stan,” Jim said, “and they’re moving into the house across the road. I’ve got to put everything under lock and key before they—”

“Hold on, Jim,” I told him, “it’s their house they’re moving into. God helping, they’re not moving into your and Jim’s house, are they, Mrs. Frost?”

“Jim,” Mrs. Frost said, shaking her finger at him and looking at me wild-eyed and sort of flustered-like, “don’t you sit there and let Stanley stop you from saving the stock and tools. Stanley came down here from the Back Kingdom, and he doesn’t know anything about Swedes.”

Mrs. Frost was partly right, because I’ve never seen the things in my whole life that I’ve seen down here near the Bay; but there wasn’t any sense in Americans like Jim and Mrs. Frost being scared of Swedes. I’ve seen enough Finns and Portuguese in my time in the Back Kingdom, up in the intervale, to know that Americans are no different from the others.

“Now, you hold on a while, Jim,” I said. “Swedes are no different than Finns. Finns don’t go around stealing another man’s stock and tools. Up in the Back Kingdom the Finns are the finest kind of neighbors.”

“That may be in the Back Kingdom, Stan,” Jim said, “but Swedes down here near the Bay are nothing like anything you’ve ever seen before. Those Swedes over there work in a paper mill over to Waterville three-four years, and when they’ve saved up enough money, or when they lose all they’ve got, as the case may be, they all move back here to East Joloppi on this farm of theirs for two-three years at a time. That’s what they do. And they’ve been doing that for the past thirty years. I can remember, and they haven’t changed. I’ve never seen the equal to it. They built that house across the road. I’ve never seen anything like it, and you haven’t got much else to do with the Swedes built that house in four years. If you’d seen that house together in four years, you’d have built it, and only six rooms in the house, yellow, too. Good God, Stan, the house, and those Swedes went down there on top of that, they went and built a house in four years, and all of them shouting and yelling and singing all night, a man never saw anything like it. But these Swedes would go and do it. And the Finns and Portuguese are different, why the Swedes would go and do it. But they never would have built a farm house. And then the Swedes would go and build a farm house, with one story, and they’d paint it yellow. Good God, Stan, they’d paint the building yellow.”

“Swedes are a little queerer than Finns and Portuguese are,” Jim said. “It’s true, and the queerest people on the earth. This is the first time you’ve been on the road, and that’s why you—”
COUNTRY FULL OF SWEDES

Doing that for the past thirty-forty years, ever since I can remember, and they haven't changed none in all that time. I can remember the first time they came to East Joloppi; they built that house across the road then, and if you've ever seen a sight like Swedes building a house in a hurry, you haven't got much else to live for. Why, Stan, those Swedes built that house in four-five days—just like that! I've never seen the equal to it. Of course, now, Stan, it's the worst looking house a man ever saw, because it's not a farm house, and it's not a city house, and it's no kind of a house an American would erect. Why, those Swedes threw that house together in four-five days—just like that! But whoever saw a house like that before, with three storeys to it, and only six rooms in the whole building? And painted yellow, too. Good God, Stan, white is the only color to paint a house, and those Swedes went and painted it yellow. Then on top of that, they went and painted the barn red. And of all of them shouting and yelling, at all times of the day and night, a man never saw or heard before. Those Swedes acted like they were purel crazy for the whole of four-five days, and they were, and they still are. But what gets me is the painting of it yellow, and the making of it three storeys high, with only six rooms in the whole building. Nobody but Swedes would go and do a thing like that; an American would have built a farm house, resting square on the ground, with one storey, maybe a storey and a half, and then painted it white. Good God, Stan, those fool Swedes had to put up three storeys, to hold six rooms, and then paint the building yellow."

"Swedes are a little queer, sometimes," I said. "But Finns and Portuguese are, too. And Americans sometimes—"

"A little queer!" Jim said. "Why, Stan, the Swedes are the queerest people on the earth. You don't know Swedes. This is the first time you've ever seen those Swedes across the road, and that's why you don't know what they're like.
after being shut up in a paper mill over to Waterville for four-five years. They're purely wild, I tell you, Stan. They don't stop at anything they set their heads on. If you were to walk out there now and tell them to move their autos and trucks out of the road so that townspeople could get past without so much trouble, they'd tear you apart, they're that wild after being shut up in the paper mills these three-four, maybe five, years."

"Finns get that way, too," I tried to tell Jim. "After Finns have been shut up in a woods camp all winter, they make a lot of noise when they get out. Everybody who has to stay close to the job for four-five years likes to act free when he gets out from under the job. Now, Jim, you take the Portuguese—"

"Don't you sit there and let Stanley keep you from putting the tools away, Jim," Mrs. Frost said. "Stanley doesn't know the Swedes like we do. He's lived up in the Back Kingdom most of his life, and he's never seen Swedes—"

"Good God, Stan," Jim said, standing up, he was that nervous and upset, "the Swedes are overrunning the whole country. I'll bet there are more Swedes in the town of East Joloppi than there are in the whole Union. Everybody knows there's more Swedes in the State of Maine than there are in the old country. They take to this State like potato bugs take to—"

"Don't you sit there and let Stanley keep you back, Jim," Mrs. Frost put in again. "Stanley doesn't know the Swedes like—"

Just then one of the big Swedes started yelling at some of the little Swedes and women Swedes. I'll swear, those big Swedes sounded like a pasture full of hoarse bulls, near the end of May, mad about the black flies. God helping, they yelled like they were fixing to kill all the little Swedes and women Swedes they could get their hands on. It didn't amount to anything though, because the little Swedes and women Swedes yelled right back. They couldn't yell hoarse bull back to make a man who's lived in the Back Kingdom this long. Joloppi was full of big Swedes.

Jim was all for getting away, but I pulled him back and let Jim and Mrs. Frost go to breakfast and then the month isn't much to pay a man for a day, including Sundays. I was going to work twelve-thousand dollars was practically one of the best wages.

"Hold on, Jim," I said to the widow and watch them cards and good times and good talk while Mrs. Frost went to eat. If they start taking things, we can see them just as long as we could out there.

"Now, Jim, I'm telling you all over, and not even tell you sit there and let Stanley and tools, He doesn't know what they're doing. Jim wasn't for staying around, and the Swedes were lying around in the pasture unprotected, we had to wait where we could hold, if we were ever going to do any good. She was so excited and Jim was going back to East Joloppi from the beans and brown bread the Swedes had before, and we had to sit there.

We were sitting there and watching the Swedes and brown bread.
per mill over to Waterville for they d like it, I tell you, Stan. They set their heads on. If you were to tell them to move their autos so that townspeople could get in, they'd tear you apart, they're in the paper mills these three-

"I tried to tell Jim. "After a woods camp all winter, they get out. Everybody who has four-five years likes to act free for the job. Now, Jim, you take

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Swedes started yelling at some women Swedes. I'll swear, those pasture full of hoarse bulls, near ut the black flies. God helping, fixing to kill all the little Swedes could get their hands on. It didn't b, because the little Swedes and

women Swedes yelled right back at them just like they were big Swedes, too. The little Swedes and women Swedes couldn't yell hoarse bull bass, but it was close enough to it to make a man who's lived most of his life in the intervale in the Back Kingdom think that the whole town of East Joloppi was full of big Swedes.

Jim was all for getting out after the tools and stock right away, but I pulled him back to the table. I wasn't going to let Jim and Mrs. Frost start me doing tasks and chores before breakfast and the regular time. Forty dollars a month isn't much to pay a man for ten-eleven hours' work a day, including Sundays, and I set myself that I wasn't going to work twelve-thirteen hours for them, even if I was practically one of the Frosts myself, except in name, by that time.

"Hold on, Jim," I said, "let's just sit here by the window and watch them carry their furniture and household goods inside while Mrs. Frost's getting the cooking ready to eat. If they start taking off any of you and Mrs. Frost's things, we can see them just as good from here by the window as we could out there in the yard and road."

"Now, Jim, I'm telling you," Mrs. Frost said, shaking all over, and not even trying to cook the breakfast, "don't you sit there and let Stanley keep you from saving the stock and tools. He doesn't know the Swedes like we do."

Jim wasn't for staying in the house when all of his tools were lying around in the yard, and while his cows were in the pasture unprotected, but he saw how it would be better to wait where we could hurry up Mrs. Frost with the cooking, if we were ever going to eat breakfast that forenoon. She was so excited and nervous about the Swedes moving back to East Joloppi from Waterville that she hadn't got the beans and brown bread fully heated from the night before, and we had to sit and eat them cold.

We were sitting there by the window eating the cold beans and brown bread, and watching the Swedes, when
two of the little Swedes started running across Jim and Mrs. Frost’s lawn. They were chasing one of their big yellow tomcats they had brought with them from Water ville. The tom was as large as a six-months collie pup, and he ran like he was on fire. His great big bushy tail stuck straight up in the air behind him, like a flag, and he was leaping over the lawn like a devilish calf, new born. Jim and Mrs. Frost saw the little Swedes and the big yellow tom at the same time I did.

“Good God,” Jim said, raising himself part of the way out of his chair, “here they come now!”

“Hold on, Jim,” I said, pulling him back to the table. “They’re only chasing one of their tomcats. They’re not after anything that belongs to you and Mrs. Frost. Let’s just sit here and finish eating the beans, and watch them out the window.”

“My crown in heaven!” Mrs. Frost cried out, running to the window and looking through. “Those Swedes are going to kill every plant on the place. They’ll dig up all the bulbs and pull up all the vines in the flower bed.”

“Now, you just sit and calm yourself, Mrs. Frost,” I told her. “Those little Swedes are just chasing a tomcat. They’re not after doing hurt to your flowers.”

The big Swedes were unloading the autos and trucks and carrying the furniture and household goods into their three-storey, yellow-clapboarded house. None of them were paying any attention to the little Swedes chasing the yellow tom over Jim and Mrs. Frost’s lawn.

Just then the kitchen door burst open, and the two little Swedes stood there looking at us, panting and blowing their heads off.

Mrs. Frost took one look at them, and then she let out a yell, but the kids didn’t notice her at all.

“Hey,” one of them shouted, “come out here and help us get the cat! He climbed up in one of your trees.”

By that time, Mrs. Frost was all for slamming the door in their faces, but I push into the yard with them. he had finished calming wouldn’t let the Swedes c and household goods.

The yellow tomcat ws young maple shade trees. to support even the smal should take it into his he tom, and neither Jim nor to think of a way to get t letting the cat stay wher couldn’t wait for anything and there, and no wasting

“You boys go home and Jim told them. “There’s until he gets ready to com But no, those two boys thinking of going back ho cat down from the maple before Jim or me could he up it like a pop-eyed squi like, he was up among the from one limb to another

“Good God, Stan,” Jin of the trees?”

There was no answer wasn’t. There’s no way o what he’s set his head on.

The boy got almost to tl clinging, when the tree b I knew what was coming, it pretty quick, and so die tree begin to bend, and he ran to the lumber pile and of two-by-fours. He got t
started running across Jim and were chasing one of their big ought with them from Water- as a six-months collie pup, and His great big bushy tail stuck him, like a flag, and he was a devilish calf, new born. Jim: Swedes and the big yellow tom raising himself part of the way come now!"

pulling him back to the table. of their tomcats. They’re not to you and Mrs. Frost. Let’s ing the beans, and watch them

Mrs. Frost cried out, running g through. “Those Swedes are the place. They’ll dig up all the nes in the flower bed.”

calm yourself, Mrs. Frost,” I edes are just chasing a tomcat. rt to your flowers.”

loading the autos and trucks and id household goods into their arded house. None of them were little Swedes chasing the yellow ost’s lawn.
or burst open, and the two little at us, panting and blowing their x at them, and then she let out a tice her at all.
outed, “come out here and help up in one of your trees.”

it was all for slamming the door in their faces, but I pushed in front of her and went out into the yard with them. Jim came right behind me, after he had finished calming Mrs. Frost, and telling her we wouldn’t let the Swedes come and carry out her furniture and household goods.

The yellow tomcat was all the way up one of Jim’s young maple shade trees. The maple wasn’t strong enough to support even the smallest of the little Swedes, if he should take it into his head to climb to the top after the tom, and neither Jim nor me was hurting ourselves trying to think of a way to get the feline down. We were all for letting the cat stay where he was, but the little Swedes couldn’t wait for anything. They wanted the cat right then and there, and no wasting of time in getting him.

“You boys go home and wait for the tom to come down,” Jim told them. “There’s no way to take him down now, until he gets ready to come down of his own free will.”

But no, those two boys were little Swedes. They weren’t thinking of going back home till they got the yellow tomcat down from the maple. One of them ran to the tree, before Jim or me could head him off, and started shinnying up it like a pop-eyed squirrel. In no time, it seemed to me like, he was up among the limbs, jumping around up there from one limb to another like he lived in it.

“Good God, Stan,” Jim said, “can’t you keep them out of the trees?”

There was no answer for that, and Jim knew there wasn’t. There’s no way of stopping a Swede from doing what he’s set his head on doing.

The boy got almost to the top, where the yellow tom was clinging, when the tree began to bend towards the house. I knew what was coming, if something wasn’t done about it pretty quick, and so did Jim. Jim saw his young shade tree begin to bend, and he almost had a fit looking at it. He ran to the lumber pile and came back dragging two pieces of two-by-fours. He got them up against the tree before it
had time to do any splitting, and then we stood there shor-
ing up the tree and yelling at the little Swede to come down out of there before we broke his neck for being up in it.

The big Swedes across the road heard the fuss we were making, and they came running out of that three-storey, six-room house like it had been on fire inside.

“Good God, Stan,” Jim shouted at me, “here comes the Swedes!”

“Don’t turn and run off, Jim,” I cautioned him, yanking him back by his coat-tail. “They’re not wild beasts; we’re not scared of them. Hold on where you are, Jim!”

I could see Mrs. Frost’s head almost breaking through the window glass in the kitchen. She was all for coming out and driving the Swedes off her lawn and out of her flowers, but she was too scared to unlock the kitchen door and open it.

Jim was getting ready to run again, when he saw the Swedes coming towards us like a nest of yellow-headed bumblebees, but I wasn’t scared of them and I held Jim’s coat-tail and told him I wasn’t. Jim and me were supporting the young maple, and I knew if one of us let go, the whole tree would bend to the ground and split wide open. There was no sense in ruining a young maple shade tree like that, and I told Jim there wasn’t.

“Hey,” one of the big Swedes shouted at the little Swede up in the top of the maple, “come down out of that tree and go home to your mother.”

“Aaw, to hell with the old lady,” the little Swede shouted down. “I’m getting the cat by the tail.”

The big Swede looked at Jim and me. Jim was almost ready to run again, by that time, but I wasn’t, and I held him and told him I wasn’t. There was no sense in letting the Swede scare the daylight out of us.

“What in hell can you do with kids when they get that age?” he asked Jim and me.

Jim was all for telling him to make the boy come down out of the maple before it but I knew there was no sense down out of there until he had the yellow tom by the tail.

Just then another big Swede looked out from the house he was worth at the other side.

“Good God, Stan,” Jim shouted, “down my young maple!”

I had lots better sense than doing what they had set the be a pure fool to try to when it got ready to, even planted.

I looked around again, a popping through the wind was thinking, but I couldn’t be good and plenty though “Come down out of the boy in Jim’s maple.

Instead of starting to reached up for the big yell out a big fat paw and hair like that, quicker than the out a yell and a shout that r to the other side of town, of Swedes up in the maple.

The big Swede covered stride, pushing everything “Good God, Stan,” Jim something!”

There wasn’t anything man of prayer. Americans getting in Swede’s way, a big double-bladed ax, and being shut up making pape
and then we stood there short of the little Swede to come down his neck for being up in it. We heard the fuss we were mingling out of that three-storey, seen on fire inside.

shouted at me, "here comes the Jim," I cautioned him, yanking They're not wild beasts; we're a where you are, Jim!" head almost breaking through the kitchen. She was all for coming off her lawn and out of her ied to unlock the kitchen door.

to run again, when he saw the like a nest of yellow-headed cared of them and I held Jim's isn't. Jim and me were supporting ew if one of us let go, the whole and split wide open. There young maple shade tree like that, edes shouted at the little Swede "come down out of that tree and lady," the little Swede shouted by the tail."

t Jim and me. Jim was almost time, but I wasn't, and I held. There was no sense in letting hts out of us.

so with kids when they get that e. him to make the boy come down out of the maple before it bent over and split wide open, but I knew there was no sense in trying to make him come down out of there until he got good and ready, or else got the yellow tom by the tail.

Just then another big Swede came running out, holding a double-bladed ax out in front of him, and yelling for all he was worth at the other Swedes.

"Good God, Stan," Jim said, "don't let those Swedes cut down my young maple!"

I had lots better sense than to try to make the Swedes stop doing what they had set their heads on doing. A man would be purely a fool to try to stop it from raining from above when it got ready to, even if he was trying to get his corn planted.

I looked around again, and there was Mrs. Frost all but popping through the window glass. I could see what she was thinking, but I couldn't hear a word she was saying. It was good and plenty though, whatever it was.

"Come down out of that tree!" the Swede yelled at the boy in Jim's maple.

Instead of starting to climb down, the little Swede reached up for the big yellow tomcat's tail. The cat reached out a big fat paw and harried the boy five-six times, just like that, quicker than the eye could follow. The kid let out a yell and a shout that must have been heard all the way to the other side of town, sounding like a whole houseful of Swedes up in the maple.

The big Swede covered the distance to the tree in one stride, pushing everything behind him.

"Good God, Stan," Jim shouted at me, "we've got to do something!"

There wasn't anything a man could do, unless he was a man of prayer. Americans like Jim and me had no business getting in a Swede's way, especially when he was swinging a big double-bladed ax, and he just out of a paper mill after being shut up making paper four-five years.
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The big Swede grabbed the ax and let go at the trunk of the maple with it. There was no stopping him then, because he had the ax going, and it was swinging like a cow's tail in a swarm of barn flies. The little maple shook all over every time the ax blade struck it, like wind blowing a cornstalk, and then it began to bend on the other side from Jim and me where we were shoring it up with the two-by-fours. Chips as big as dinner plates were flying across the lawn and peltering the house like a gang of boys stoning telephone insulators. One of those big dinner plate chips crashed through the kitchen window where Mrs. Frost was, about that time. Both Jim and me thought at first she had fallen through the window—when we looked again, we could see that she was still on the inside, and madder than ever at the Swedes.

The two-by-fours weren't any good then, because it was too late to get to the other side of the maple in time to keep it from bending over in that direction. The Swede with the ax took one more swing, and the tree began to bend towards the ground.

The tree came down, the little Swede came down, and the big yellow tom came down on top of everything, holding for all he was worth to the top of the little Swede's head. But long before the tree and the boy struck the ground, the big yellow tomcat had sprung what looked like thirty feet, and landed in the middle of Mrs. Frost's flowers and bulbs. The little Swede let out a yell when he hit the ground that brought out six-seven more Swedes from that three-storey, six-room house, piling out into the road like it was the first time they had ever heard a kid bawl. The women Swedes and the little Swedes and the big Swedes piled out on Jim and Mrs. Frost's front lawn like they had been dropped out of a dump truck. The big yellow tom had made one more spring when he hit the flower bed, and that leap landed him over the stone wall. Then he

struck out for the woods with behind him.

I thought Mrs. Frost was and there in the kitchen window of Swedes chasing across her la in her flower bed among the ing up the things she had pla No. 12 heels squashing the groing along—well, I guess she just out of sight for the time being run to see what was wrong wi had to tear out behind the tom as much as we could.

"Good God, Stan," Jim shot and ring up all the neighbors s hurry over here and help us b and wreck my farm and build they'll do next. They'll be setti next thing, maybe."

But I didn't have time to on the telephone line. About t Swedes, who were still inside gan shooting off those guns ag out for the kitchen door. Mr when she saw us on our way, headed for the shelter of the about a lot of guns going off in man jumpy, and there was no and getting plugged with moose aimed any which-way by the hazard towards us.

"Good God," Jim shouted, dancing up and down so high hitting his chin, "those Swe They're shooting every which
COUNTRY FULL OF SWEDES

struck out for the woods with every Swede on the place behind him.

I thought Mrs. Frost was going to have a fit right then and there in the kitchen window. When she saw that swarm of Swedes chasing across her lawn, and the big yellow tom in her flower bed among the tender plants and bulbs, digging up the things she had planted, the Swedes with their No. 12 heels squashing the green shoots she had been nursing along—well, I guess she just sort of caved in, and fell out of sight for the time being. I didn’t have the time to run to see what was wrong with her, because Jim and me had to tear out behind the tom and the Swedes to try to save as much as we could.

“Good God, Stan,” Jim shouted at me, “go in the house and ring up all the neighbors on the line, and tell them to hurry over here and help us before the Swedes come back and wreck my farm and buildings. There’s no telling what they’ll do next. They’ll be setting fire to the house and barn next thing, maybe.”

But I didn’t have time to waste talking to the neighbors on the telephone line. About that time, some of the other Swedes, who were still inside the house across the road, began shooting off those guns again, and Jim and me struck out for the kitchen door. Mrs. Frost held it open for us, when she saw us on our way, because she knew we were headed for the shelter of the house. There’s something about a lot of guns going off in Swedes’ houses that makes a man jumpy, and there was no sense in staying in the open and getting plugged with moose bullets, whether they were aimed any which-way by the Swedes, or just fired off haphazard towards us.

“Good God,” Jim shouted, running around the kitchen, dancing up and down so high his knees were just about hitting his chin, “those Swedes are purely crazy now! They’re shooting every which-way!”
MRS. FROST TIPTOED TO THE WINDOW AND LOOKED OUT THROUGH THE BROKEN PANE WHERE THE CHIP CAME SAILING THROUGH. "IF I HAD A GUN," SHE SAID, "I'D GO SHOOT EVERY ONE OF THOSE SWEDES BEFORE THE DAY IS DONE."

"HOLD ON," JIM SAID, GRABBING MRS. FROST BY HER ARMS AND HOLDING HER AS TIGHT AS HE COULD. "DON'T YOU GO DOING ANYTHING TO THOSE SWEDES. WE DON'T WANT TO MAKE THEM MAD."

"GOD HELPING, JIM," I SAID, "AREN'T THOSE SWEDES ALREADY MAD ABOUT SOMETHING OR OTHER? WEREN'T THEY MAD JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO, OUT THERE ON THE LAWN, CUTTING DOWN THE MAPLE AND TO GET THAT YELLOW TON DOWN TO THE GROUND?"

"YOU DON'T KNOW THE SWEDES LIKE WE DO, STAN," JIM SAID, TURNING MRS. FROST LOOSE AND STANDING BY THE RANGE SHIVERING AND SHAKING. "YOU'VE LIVED MOST OF YOUR LIFE UP IN THE BACK KINGDOM. THOSE SWEDES WERE ONLY AFTER GETTING THAT YELLOW TON. THEY WEREN'T MAD ABOUT ANYTHING. NOBODY PROVOKED THEM."

"WELL, JIM," I SAID, "IF YOU WANT ME TO, I'LL GO OVER THERE TO THAT HOUSE ACROSS THE ROAD AND RAISE HELL WITH EVERY SWede ON THE INSIDE OF IT FOR CUTTING DOWN YOUR YOUNG MAPLE AND TEARING UP MRS. FROST'S FLOWER BED."

"MY CROWN IN HEAVEN," MRS. FROST SAID, RUNNING TO JIM AND HOLDING ON TO HIM, "JIM, DON'T LET STANLEY MAKE THE SWEDES MAD. THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE WE HAVE TO LIVE IN, AND THEY'LL BE HERE A YEAR NOW THIS TIME, MAYBE TWO-THREE, IF THE HARD TIMES DON'T GET ANY BETTER SOON."

"THAT'S RIGHT, STAN," HE SAID. "YOU DON'T KNOW THEM LIKE WE DO. YOU WOULD HAVE TO BE A SWede YOURSELF TO KNOW WHAT TO TELL THEM. DON'T GO OVER THERE DOING ANYTHING LIKE THAT."

"BUT, JIM," I SAID, "YOU AND MRS. FROST AIN'T SCARED OF THE SWEDES, ARE YOU?"

"GOOD GOD, NO," HE SAID, HIS EYES POPPING OUT; "BUT DON'T GO MAKING THEM MAD."