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attention. They played two games, and John J. walked his wife to the stairs, where he kissed her goodnight. He breathed a great sigh of relief when he came back to find the kitchen empty. Christina and Ronnie began going everywhere together. He even brought her home from Mass on Sundays. After a few weeks had passed, Christina felt safe enough to tell Ronnie the same story she had told John J. Ronnie was all concern. "It'll be all right, Christina," he said. "I'll make it all right. Don't cry!" Ronnie placed a sheltering arm around her slender shoulders, and soothed her weeping dark head on his chest. He'd tell his father tonight that he wanted to marry Christina • one of the Roosters. The old man wouldn't like it. He was death on the drink, and the Roosters all drank. Ronnie could picture the scene in his head. But the old man was getting too slow now to keep up with the work, and he'd have to agree. After practicing with John J., Christina had done well. Things were not so simple for Ronnie. But not for the reason he expected. When he got home that night, old Angus MacDougall, his neighbour, stamped into the kitchen, fire in his eyes. "What ye gonna do about it?" the old man shouted. "About what?" Ronnie's voice cracked like a boy soprano's. "About Brigid! That's who! Ye fixed her! She said ye did, and I know myself ye've been mooning around the edge of the woods nights with a bunch of smart Alocs. What's done, done. Are ye going to make it legal? Ye've got a good home here. Or are ye going to pay? Three hundred dollars! Right in my hand! Friday! Or get the license. No one's going to ride me girl like a dog and get away free." When the old man paused for breath, Ronnie said halfheartedly, "I wasn't the only one. There was • " "Never mind telling me that stuff," the old man raged. "Trying to weasel out of it. Who d'ye think ye are anyway? Ye have a home. An' a damn fine home too! No reason ye can't marry her." Ronnie gave up. Old MacDougall had known himself what was going on when Ronnie and the other boys had waylaid the girl out walking those summer nights. Ronnie wasn't too bright, but he could spot a frame-up as obvious as this one. He also knew that to name the other fellows was useless. He might as well shield them. Ronnie went to his best friend for advice. John J. caught the nod from Ronnie that he'd been waiting for. Christina had stayed up to tell him about their conversation when he got home from Wrexham, but John J. had no way of knowing about the trap Ronnie had fallen into. The two men made an excuse to leave the kitchen and went out into the bam. John J. was fascinated by the intrigue. "Ronnie," he said, slapping him on the shoulder, "it's good ye came to me." "John J., you're the only friend I got. You being kind of related to Christina and all." Ronnie shoved his nervous hands into his pockets to hide their trembling. "Truth is, I got no money to pay old MacDougall, and it's Christina I want to marry. She's the one I want. And even my old man would rather have her in the house than MacDougall's girl...." "Aye, Rormie," John J. was sympathetic. "She's by far the best giri. That other one • Brigid. Kinda light upstairs, ain't she?" "What am I gonna do?" Ronnie was as near crying as he had ever been in his life. "What can I do?" "Well, I ain't got much money." John J. was trying to conceal his delight. "But I s'pose, being it's my own cousin by marriage, I might



be able to give you the three hundred for MacDougall. But if there's any funny work about Christina, I'll have the Mounties after ye. Friend or no." "Oh, John J., ye needn't worry 'bout Christina. I wanted to marry her all the time. Ye'll never be sorry, John J. Never. Thank ye! Thank ye! I'll go tell Christina!" "Wait!" John J. called after him, his brain working fast now. "No need to tell Christina about Brigid. We'll just keep it quiet between ourselves. Old MacDougall ain't liable to tell. Keep tiie money quiet too. Christina might be tiiinkin' she owes us, or sometiing foolish like tiiat." "Just as you say, John J.," said Ronnie. "Can ye give me the money Friday?" "Yiss! Go ahead. Set the date. Christina's prob'ly waiting." John J, stayed outside a little while, watching the stars and smiling to himself. This extract is taken from a much longer story In The Promised Land: Stories of Cape Breton by Tessie Gillis. The book is avaiable in book and gift stores, and direct from Medicine Label Press, R. R. 2, West Bay, Nova Scotia BOE 3K0. Price: \$10.00. IT'S NOT JUST A NEW TELEVISION...IT'S A NEW TECHNOLOGY! Pronounced GA-OH, it means "King of Picture". With a flatter, blacker screen, the latest evolution in stereo , sound, and a totally new design... ADVANCED SUPERFLAT AND ACTIVE DOME SOUND SYSTEMS.] PLUS, THESE INNOVATIVE FEATURES: • 181-Channel Cable-Ready""- Tuners '- ~--C'Vj • Full On-Screen Menu" " "" Display %C"- • Dual-Programmable '/' On/Off/Sleep Timer "y • Favourite Channel Feature • Universal Remote Control • A/V Surround Capability • Front and Rear A/V Inputs • S-VHS (YC) Inputs • Variable Audio and Program Out \$\$\$ 195 ?? PC-29XF10A • J • .' .. I Custom Matching y'r '/' " Stand - Optional ' seaER Panasonic Purchase from an Authorized CAOO dealer in Canada. J. R./RAHEY'S FURNITURE AMD APPLIANCES SYDNEY RIVER 562-2506 SYDNEY MINES 736-9442