Cris thought of that ridiculous bromide about bears. Look 'em in the eye. Stare them down. Don't give an inch. And then some tired, giddy part of his brain added, but whatever you do, don't get too near the cage.

He knew that if it came to protecting himself he'd be lost. He was too tired. Too tired to care. He was exhausted, his body a dead weight, and panting with the exertion of standing his ground. He wanted to plead with Beck, he wanted to say, please, Beck, please don't make trouble. Please, don't make me fight, don't make me think, don't force me to do anything except act as though I'm a living human being. Please, for Christ's sake, Beck, please don't give me a hard time. I'm tired. I'm just too damned beat! *I'm too beat to bother!*

And just when he thought he couldn't take another minute of it, he saw Beck break the threatening stare, saw him turn without a word and go to his own bed where he seated himself in the bedside chair, his back turned to Cris. He didn't move, not a muscle, not a hair. So that Cris' first reaction was relief, a relief so great it left him weak. It lasted until he got back to his bunk later that morning, and then he fell asleep as soon as he hit the pillow, and dreamed, the red hot nerves convulsing his body in the same old nightmare, a pinpoint of terror hidden somewhere in the back of his brain moving forward, swelling, exploding into the sounds of screaming men, faces filled with hate and pain, and faceless men, and men dead in the mud, and the sound and stench of war—all reflected in the tortured, silent eyes of Sergeant Beck!

THAT night the crew was alerted. Radar had spotted a submarine pack ahead, and as Cris made for the ward, the *Queen* was already swinging around in a wide circle to evade it. The night was icy black, hung with crisp stars, and silent except for the wind and the wash of water. A cold night for drowning.

The corpsman was taut under his nonchalance. Cris gave him a smoke and they waited quietly. The corpsman gave in first.

"Any sub the *Queen* can't run away from I've gotta see."

Cris nodded.

"Thirty knots," the corpsman said. "That's a lotta steam."

Cris would have traded speed for protection. The *Queen* traveled without convoy. There was a low humming sound, and a perceptible vibration beneath his feet as the ship steamed against hard rudder.

"That's power," the corpsman said, a little over-enthusiastically. "Feel it, Doc?"

Cris nodded.

The corpsman exhaled rather abruptly a large puff of smoke. "Whoever heard of mice chasing a cat this big!" he chuckled nervously. "We'll lose 'em."

"Sure."

Cris looked into the ward. The lights were still on. Beck was sitting beside his bed, his head in his hands. Kelsey, flat on his back, was fast asleep. A young man called Higgins stood in the middle of the ward gesticulating at the floor. The others were in bed. Kramer, the one with pneumonia, had a short spasm of coughing, then lay still.

"Better get an aspirator for Kramer," Cris said. "He'll choke on that mucus."

He wrote a note on the chart, ordered more infusions, then stopped to listen. The vibration had died.

The corpsman grinned, winked an eye. "What'd I tell you?" he said. "We'll be cutting speed in a couple of minutes."

"Sounds good."

"I can hear those Heinies cryin' in their beer."

Cris went back to his chart. The corpsman chuckled.

"Nothin' for them to do now but go back to polishin' them torpedoes some more. Fat chance they'll get to use 'em on the *Queen!*"

Cris put away his pen.

"Let's have a look at Kramer."

"Right, sir."

Beck didn't look up as they passed him, and Cris decided he must be asleep. The corpsman shooed Higgins into bed, then joined Cris. Kramer's chin glistened with saliva, the mouth hanging open, the features waxen in coma. Cris checked over the chest, wrote more orders and sent the corpsman for an aspirator. Kramer was wheezing through the muck in his throat, sucking it into his bronchial tubes, the gag reflex gone for some reason. It couldn't be. He'd coughed a few minutes ago. Hell, Cris swore. If this were a perforated bowel he'd be thinking automatically, without confusion. Or a banged up arm. Or an empyema. What was it? Why should a half-baked pneumonia throw him? The back of his neck and shoulders felt as if they'd gone through a wringer. He straightened. Then a flash of consolation—Beck! He'd succeeded with Beck, hadn't he? A feather in his cap, indeed. Really an accomplishment, that. There was the fear of God in Beck now, and Cris had put it there. The first really important step in the treatment of any psychotic was making him recognize authority. Recognition of authority is the seal of civilization, of sanity, he thought, and he had done that for Beck. The realization flushed him with pride.

He continued the rounds alone until the corpsman returned and wheeled the small glistening pump beside Kramer's bed, his face grinning.

"We lost 'em, Doc! What'd I tell you?"

Cris was starting the motor, checking the pharyngeal airway.

"What?"

"The subs. We're in the clear. I just talked to the boys in the operation room."

Cris completed suction, shut off the pump.

"Okay. Better take it back. I'll finish up in here."

THE corpsman rolled the apparatus down the aisle as Cris started for a bed on the other side of the ward. Higgins was sitting up in his bed giggling idiotically behind him. Suddenly he broke into a riotous cackle, and Cris turned just in time to see a sight that froze the blood in his veins. Beck had gotten behind the corpsman who was fitting his key into the door, his big arm raised above the corpsman's head. Cris yelled too late, yelled just as the

TEST YOUR HORSE SENSE

By Webb B. Garrison

In each case, select the correct answer and place the corresponding letter in the blank. When completed, the vertical line will spell the name of a famous racing horse.

1. Bucephalus belonged to: (W) Alexander the Great; (M) the Marx brothers; (R) Napoleon.
2. Horses have been known to live to be as old as: (A) twelve years; (E) eighteen years, six months; (H) more than thirty.
3. Silver is associated with: (O) Tom Mix; (I) the Lone Ranger; (U) Buffalo Bill.
4. Assault is famous for (R) winning nearly $500,000 in purses in a single year; (S) his role in *The Birth of a Nation;* (T) carrying Eisenhower into Berlin.
5. The Wooden Horse helped win: (G) Battle of Bunker Hill; (C) Battle of New Orleans; (L) Siege of Troy.
6. The ill-fed nag, Rosinante, is an important character in a famous story by: (A) Cervantes; (E) Shakespeare; (I) Sir Walter Scott.
7. A few fine race horses can run a quarter-mile stretch at about: (W) 40 m.p.h.; (A) 60 m.p.h.; (Y) 75 m.p.h.
8. Man o' War gained immortality by: (R) participating in the Charge of the Light Brigade; (S) winning the Epsom Derby; (A) winning the Kentucky Derby.
9. The famous horse belonging to General Robert E. Lee was named: (M) Dan Patch; (P) Black Agnes; (Y) Traveller.

ANSWER ON PAGE 78