

THE SNORING MACHINE

*on a full*  
(The Bag of Tricks)

by

Leo Szilard

When I opened my eyes, there was bright sunshine. I pulled the curtains and opened the window; a fresh breeze from the mountains hit me in the face. I looked at the watch and prepared to shave when the telephone rang.

"A Miss Lillian Watford from Chicago, *falling* Sir" the clerk said.

"Collect, collect. Will you accept the charges?"

"Put her on" I said.

*Lilly*  
"Lillian", I said "who told you I was here? What can I do for you?"

*never*  
"Of course you want something" I said. "Generous *people* natures like you and *only of* ~~do not call collect if they are about to bestow favors.~~ *if it is the father's pocket*"

"Well" I said "that will be difficult: the hotel is full. I made my reservations six months ago."

"Wouldn't one room do?" I asked. "Who is this Peter?"

"You are engaged to him", ~~I said~~ "but you do not yet know whether you want to marry him?" *I asked.* *I said,*

"Why not take one room and find out?" I ~~asked.~~ *said.*

"All right," I said "It is your business, but I do not think it is fair to the poor guy" ~~I said.~~

"Well" I said "I will see what I can do. I have been coming here for the last five years, I know the manager and Joe, the clerk, will do anything for me."

*as said*  
"No," I didn't say short of murder."

"Sure, I said, I saved his life during the war. Didn't I tell you the story?"

*the was added to in need of a house*



*I shall just*  
"All right" I said "listen to ~~this~~ this. It was in the summer of '45. I came in late at night and started to talk to Joe. "What is wrong Joe" I said "You look worried tonight."

He had been called up, he told me and was to have his physical examination the next morning.

"Well," I said. "What are you afraid of?" "By the time you have learned to peel potatoes, the war will be over."

It was not the shooting he was afraid of, he said, but life in the barracks. Fifty men in one room, one of them is sure to snore. Snoring gives him <sup>the</sup> jitters and if he has the jitters, he surely will misunderstand orders and if he disobeys orders, he will be put in the clink. No greater disgrace than to <sup>celebrate</sup> ~~spend the war~~ in the clink, <sup>V.J. day</sup> ~~and, besides, what good would he do that way to Uncle Sam.~~

"Well, Joe" I said "You are short sighted, aren't you?" *asked.*

He was short-sighted, he said, but not that short-sighted.

"Let me see your glasses" I said.

As he handed me his glasses they somehow slipped out of my hand and fell to the floor. They broke, both of the lenses broke to pieces. I picked up the frame and looked at it for a moment and then I <sup>thought I had</sup> ~~was struck by~~ an idea.

"Look here, Joe" I said. "I will keep you out of the ~~arm~~ army, just do exactly as I tell you. Tomorrow at your physical you wear these glasses, <sup>if you</sup> These frames, I mean. You have no complaint you understand, you are perfectly healthy. <sup>and when</sup> If they ask you ~~why~~ why you wear these frames with no glass inside, you <sup>say you</sup> see better ~~it~~ with them. You just stick to that story ~~and~~ say nothing else. <sup>and you will be all right</sup>

"Did it work?" *he asked*

"Of course it did. My tricks always work, <sup>if</sup> You should know that by now."

"O.K." I said "I'll call you ~~back~~ tomorrow". And I hung up.

When I finished shaving, I went and talked to Joe. As I thought, the hotel was booked for weeks.



~~two~~  
 "Who has the room next to mine?" I asked

"A Mrs. Blake from Massachusetts" Joe said.

"And the room next to hers?"

"That's empty" said Joe, "but we expect the Senator ~~tomorrow~~ <sup>to night.</sup>

"How is his voting record?" I asked.

"Lousy" said Joe "and besides <sup>at some times</sup> he snores."

"How do you know that?" I asked.

"I <sup>can hear snoring</sup> ~~know he snores five rooms away,~~ <sup>anywhere in the</sup> said Joe. <sup>whole hotel would see</sup>

<sup>Is</sup> "I know", I said "I remember." Why not ~~then~~ cancel his reservation?"

"This hotel does not rent rooms on the basis of voting records," I know it should, but it doesn't." <sup>of</sup> said Joe. <sup>some of your guests</sup>

"I ~~didn't mean his voting record.~~ I meant his snoring <sup>will keep Mrs. Blake</sup> awake" I said. <sup>my</sup>

<sup>Insert I</sup> "Look here, Joe" I said "I need two rooms for a friend. Will you let me know the very moment there is a <sup>vacancy</sup> ~~cancellation~~?"

Joe said he would, but I had better talk to the manager also. I went to have my breakfast and afterwards smoked a cigar. By the time I was through with it I seemed to have an idea. I put through a call to the University of Denver.

"Say, Phil" I said "Could you come up here this <sup>morning</sup> ~~afternoon~~ and help me rig up an experiment?"

Phil said he could.

"Do you have a wire recorder and a speaker"? I asked.

They had a gadget that could take down a five minutes conversation and ~~run~~ around and around in a loop.

"That suits me fine" I said "bring it along."

<sup>Shed (Lunch)</sup> Phil <sup>came up for dinner</sup> ~~came up for dinner~~ and went back <sup>night after news</sup> ~~the same night~~. I retired ~~early~~ and put the wire recorder on the dresser as close to my head as possible. I do not snore loudly they tell me but it should be loud enough for a sensitive instrument at close distance.

<sup>When I make up</sup> I <sup>hooked</sup> ~~hooked~~ the gadget to the radio <sup>and</sup> ~~set~~ the timer for 10 pm. —



*Just before dinner time*

Next day at noon I told Joe that I was going to Denver for the night and would he please call me at the Brown Palace the next day if there was a ~~change~~ *news*, — cancellation and they could let me have the two rooms for my friend.

*mine home* "I am keeping my room, of course" I told Joe "and I ~~expect~~ *shall* be back tomorrow night."

*at* The next morning at ~~eleven~~ *ten* o'clock the telephone shook me out of bed ~~at~~ the Brown Palace.

"We have two rooms for you, Sir." Joe said. "The ~~one~~ *and you can have the room next to Mrs Blake's* one next to yours ~~the lady decided to leave and the Senator's reservation is also cancelled.~~ *his reservation also.*"

"That's fine, Joe" I said.

I felt I had better not ask any questions. *about Mrs Blake and* I called up Lilly ~~and told her~~ *but I didn't call her* the Senator ~~snoring~~ *right away*.  
~~the Senator's reservation is also cancelled.~~

"Well" she said "How is tricks?"

"Well" I said, "What did you expect? You have the rooms, of course."

When I told her the story I could tell she was quite impressed.

~~It was midnight~~ *It was midnight* when I got back to my hotel. Joe was at the desk.

"When will your friends arrive" he asked.

"Tomorrow morning" I said. *night*

"I could not sleep all ~~day~~ *night*" Joe said. "So I cleared out the drawers of my desk and I came across this old bill" Joe said. "Thought you might ~~want~~ *why* to pay for it. *refund it to me?*"

I looked at the bill. It was for a pair of glasses dated August 1945.

"Why you ungrateful rascal" I said. "Didn't I save your life?"

"What is a man's life worth" Joe said "when he cannot sleep?"

"What do you mean"? I said.

"You snored so loudly last night that ~~no one~~ *no one* could sleep anywhere in your wing of the hotel."

"Why" I said "I was in Denver last night. The Senator snores doesn't he?"



*and stayed*  
 "Yes" said Joe "but he was ~~not~~ *stayed* in Washington last night. That is even further from here than Denver. ~~He cancelled his reservation yesterday.~~ *and the snoring came from your room.*

*he*  
 "Tell me everything" I said, crestfallen. "What about Mrs. Blake?"

"Did she leave because of snoring?"

"Mrs. Blake is deaf, Sir" Joe said. "Her daughter broke her engagement and she was recalled to Boston."

*I said*  
 "O.K.," Joe "I ~~said~~ "give me that bill. "I am going to refund you the money."

*did not have the heart*  
 That's right" said Joe. "I intended to spare your feelings but I might ~~as well tell you now that I was rejected because of flat feet.~~ *to tell you before it was too late perhaps you had better know I'm taking the army*

*this*  
 it is just as well ~~that~~ *you*  
 should know

*me*



~~Insert~~ Insert. ( The Snoring Machine)

*Go page 3*

"As to snoring, Sir" said Joe "he <sup>will</sup> ~~may~~ have to snore first and <sup>next</sup> ~~then~~ someone will have to complain before we can get him out of the hotel. <sup>and that</sup> ~~Then~~ it will take some finagling."

*"You make him snore" I said,  
and I shall ~~do~~ <sup>finish</sup> the rest"*



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Leo Szillard

When I opened my eyes, there was bright sunshine in my hotel room. I pulled/<sup>up</sup>the curtains and raised the window; a fresh breeze from the mountains hit me in the face. I looked at my watch and prepared to shave; then the telephone rang:

"A Miss Lillian Watford from Chicago, sir," the clerk said, "calling collect. Will you accept the charges?"

"Put her on," I replied: then I was speaking to Lillian:

"Lillian," I said, "who told you I was here? What can I do for you? - Generous natures like yours and mine do not call collect if they are about to bestow favors...Well, that will be difficult; the hotel is full. I made my reservation six months ago...Wouldn't one room do?...Who is this Peter? You are engaged to him, but you do not yet know whether you want to marry him? Did I hear you correctly?...Why not take one room and find out?...All right, it's your business, but I don't think it's fair to the poor guy...Well, I'll see what I can do. I've been coming here for the last five years. I know the manager, and Joe, the clerk, will do anything for me...No, I didn't say short of murder...Sure, I told you I saved his life during the war. Didn't I tell you the story? All right," I said, "Listen to this:"

"It was in the summer of '45. I came in to the hotel late one night and started to talk to Joe. He looked worried. "What's wrong Joe" I said. Then he told me: He had been called up, and was to have his physical examination the next morning.



"What are you afraid of?" I asked him. ~~HEXWAX~~ "By the time you've learned to peel potatoes, the war will be over."

But it seemed it was not the shooting he was afraid of, but life in the barracks. Fif ty men in one room, and one of them sure to snore. Snoring gave him the jitters and if he got jitters, he woul d get his or ders all wrong and if he disobeyed orders, he w o uld then land in t he clink. No greater disgrace could come to him than to spend the war in the clink and, besides, that way what good woul d he be to Uncle Sa m?

"Well, Joe", I said, 'are n't yo u short-sighted?'

He admitted he was short-sighted, but not that short-sighted.

"Let me see your glasses".

He handed me his glasses and as he did somehow they slipped out of my hand and fell t o t he floor. They broke and both of the lenses were in pieces. I picked up the frame an d looked at it for a moment; then I was struck by an idea.

"Look here, Joe" I said, 'I'll keep you out of the army. Just do exactly as I tell you. Tomor row at your physical, you wear these glasses. These frames, I mean. You have no compl aint yo u understand, you are perfectly hea lthy. If they ask you why you wear these fr ame s with no glass inside, yo u tell them that yo u see better with them. Just stick to that s tory and say nothing else...'"

" Did it work? Of course it worked. My tricks always do - you should know that by ~~xxx~~ now...O.K., I'll call you back tomorrow." And I hung up. When I finished shaving, I went and talked to Joe, safe and whole and e ver grateful behind the desk. As I thought, the hotel was booked for weeks.

"Who has the room next to mine?" I asked

"A Mr s. Blake from Massachusetts ", Joe said.

"And the room next to hers?"

"That's empty," said Joe. "But we expect the Senator tomorrow."

"How is his voting record?" I asked.

"Lousy," said Joe. "And be sides he snores."

"How do you know that?" I asked.



"Who has the room next to mine?" I asked

"A Mrs. Blake from Massachusetts" Joe said

"

A



"H "How do I know? He snores five rooms away," He laughed.

Then I remembered; so he did.

"Why not cancel his reservation then?"

But Joe wasn't that drastic. "This hotel doesn't rent rooms on the basis of voting records," he apologized. "It should, but it doesn't."

"I didn't mean his voting record. I meant his snoring - won't it keep Mrs. Blake awake?" He shrugged; obviously not his business.

"Look here, Joe," I said, "I need two rooms for a friend. Will you let me know the very moment there is a cancellation?"

Joe said he would, but added that I had better talk to the manager, too, and that was that. But first I went to have my breakfast and then smoked a cigar. By the time I was through with the cigar, there was the idea. Immediately I put through a call to the University of Denver.

"Say, Phil," I said, "could you come up here this afternoon and help me rig up an experiment?"

Phil said he could.

"Do you have a wire recorder and a speaker?" I asked.

He said they had a gadget that could take down a five minutes conversation and then run it around and around in a loop, if that would help me.

"That's fine," I said. "Bring it along."

Phil came up for dinner and went back the same night. I retired early and put the wire recorder on the dresser as close to my head as possible. I do not snore loudly, they tell me, but it should be loud enough for a sensitive instrument at close distance.

The next day at noon I told Joe I was going to Denver for the night and <sup>would</sup> ~~would~~ he please



"Who has the room next to mine?" I asked

"A Mrs. Blake from Massachusetts" Joe said

"

A



call me at the Brown Palace there if there was a cancellation so I could have the two rooms for my friend. I added, "I am keeping my room, of course. I expect to be back tomorrow night."

The next morning at eleven o'clock the telephone shook me out of sleep in my room at the Brown Palace.

"We have two rooms for you, sir," Joe said. "The lady in the one next to your decided to leave and the Senator's reservation has been cancelled."

"That's fine, Joe," I told him and felt I had better not ask any questions. Then I called up Lilly.

"Well," she said, "how's tricks?"

"You have the rooms of course," I told her. "What did you expect?"

She was quite impressed.

It was midnight when I got back from Denver to my hotel; Joe was at the desk. "When will your friends arrive?" He asked with no particular warmth.

I told him I expected them the next morning, and started toward the elevator, but he stopped me. "I've got something for you," he said. He held a piece of paper in his hand. "I couldn't sleep all night, so I cleared out the drawers of my desk and came across this." I took it from him. It was an old bill, dated August, 1945. "I thought you might want to pay it."

I looked at it. It was for a pair of glasses. "Why, you ungrateful rascal!" I exclaimed. "Didn't I save your life?"

"What's a man's life worth," he asked me, "when he can't sleep."



"What do you mean?"

"You snored so much last night that no one anywhere in your wing of the hotel could sleep."

"I was in Denver last night," I remonstrated. "It was the Senator, not I."

"Maybe," said Joe, "but if it was he was doing it in Washington. At least that's where he was last night. ~~XXXXXX~~  
~~XX~~ And Washington is even further than Denver." He cancelled his reservation yesterday."

"Tell me everything, Joe," I said crestfallen. "What about Mrs. Blake? Did she leave because of snoring?"

"Mrs. Blake is deaf, sir," Joe said. "Her daughter broke her ~~engagement~~  
her engagement and she went back to Boston."

"Okay, Joe," I said, "give me that bill. I'm going to pay you the money."

"I wasn't going to tell you," said Joe. "I intended to spare your feelings, but you might as well know -- I was rejected because of flat feet."