

LOOKING INTO THE LOOKING GLASS

Have you ever looked into a looking glass and wondered if there were someone in some country who had features identical to yours? What would you do if you went into some building in a strange country and sat next to a person who could pass as your twin? Daphne du Maurier, in the novel, The Scapegoat, uses this situation as the starting point in her mystery novel.

John who has no surname is an Englishman who is touring France. He has established no social contacts with people and is on the verge of entering a monastery. In a bar in Le Mans he meets a man who is his physical double, Jean de Gue. The Comte de Gue is anxious to leave his environment and the complex situations which crowd his everyday life. For example, he has a sister who hasn't spoken to him for fifteen years, a ten-year-old daughter who has symptoms of being a saint, and a mysteriously bedridden mother who casually expects him to arrange his wif's death.

The Comte de Gue drugs John and takes all his identifications and clothes and vanishes. John, the Englishman, after awakening, plays his role in the masquerade, only to discover that Jean de Gue is selfish, destructive, almost loathsome. He also makes a devastating self-discovery: he and Jean are not only physical doubles but also personality doubles.

Daphne du Maurier unravels the plot in such a manner that the reader never doubts the fact that an impostor of a completely different cultural background is accepted by everyone nearest to the original man, and that each can speak the other's language with no accent and can write the other's signature after a moment's practice.

A depiction of rural French life is presented and the threads of the mystery novel become more tangled. During the Easter Vacation when the luxury of a few spare minutes can be enjoyed by college students a good novel is always welcomed. Daphne du Maurier has written an excellent novel that completely fills the bill.

--Mimi Arlotto

The Scapegoat by Daphne du Maurier
New York: Doubleday and Company

CAN YOU IMAGINE

PROFESSOR STEEL smoking a pipe
JOHN ZOLTAK with a white beard
MARY MERKER weighing 200 pounds
MRS. BODENSTEIN with a French accent
THE ENGINEERS AND LIBERAL ARTS STUDENTS not arguing over who has the "zip" course
CAPTAIN HARHI an airman 3rd class
CONNIE walking through the lounge without being seen
THE ENGINEERS taking music as a required course.
MR. WILCOX driving a new "caddie"
THE RIFLE TEAM beating an opposing team
THE PENN STATE RIFLE TEAM using real bullets and shooting at Elvis Presley
BARBARA NARDINI seven feet tall
BOBBY PETRUSKA bowling 200
SMOKING in the class rooms
NO DEMERIT CARDS FOR R.O.T.C. CADETS
PROFESSOR KAFKA teaching a "How to read a comics course"
MR. MCKINSTRY playing in the Benny Goodman band
MISS GARBRICK playing "bop" records in her music classes.
THE LIBRARY FULL OF COMIC BOOKS
CLASSROOMS WITH LOUNGE CHAIRS
BEER IN THE COFFEE MACHINE
THE STUDENTS OF THE SPANISH AND GERMAN CLASSES HAVING INTERPRETERS
---George Opilla