THE FARM

by ERNEST HEMINGWAY

When I first knew Miró he had very little money and very little to eat and he worked all day every day for nine months painting a very large and wonderful picture called "The Farm". He did not want to sell this picture nor even to have it away from him. No one could look at it and not know it had been painted by a great painter and when you are painting things that people must take on trust it is good to have something around that has taken as long to make as it takes a woman to make a child (a woman who isn't a woman can usually write her autobiography in a third of that time) and that shows even fools that you are a great painter in terms that they understand.

After Miró had painted " The Farm " and after James Joyce had written *Ulysses* they had a right to expect people to trust the further things they did even when the people did not understand them and they have both kept on working very hard.

If you have painted " The Farm " or if you have written *Ulysses*, and then keep on working very hard afterwards, you do not need an Alice B. Toklas.

Finally everyone had to sell everything and if Miró was to have a dealer he had to let " The Farm " go with the other pictures. But Shipman, who found him the dealer, made the dealer put a price on it and agree to sell it to him. This was probably the only good business move that Shipman ever did in his life. But doing a good business move must have made him uncomfortable because he came to me the same day and said, " Hem, you should have *The Farm*. I do not love anything as much as you care for that picture and you ought to have it. "

I argued against this explaining to him that it was not only how much I cared about it. There was the value to consider.

" It is going to be worth much more than we will ever have, Evan. You have no idea what it will be worth, " I told him.

" I don't care about that, " he said. " If it's money I'll shoot you dice for it. Let the dice decide about the money. You'll never sell it anyway. "

" I have no right to shoot. You're shooting against yourself. "

" Let the dice decide the money, " Shipman insisted. " If I loose it will be mine. Let the dice show. "

So we rolled dice and I won and made the first payment. We agreed to pay five thousand francs for *The Farm* and that was four thousand two hundred and fifty francs more than I had ever paid for a picture. The picture naturally stayed with the dealer.

When it was time to make the last payment the dealer came around and was very pleased because there was no money in the house or in the bank. If we did not pay the money that day he kept the picture. Dos Passos, Shipman and I finally borrowed the money around various bars and restaurants, got the picture and brought it home in a taxi. The dealer felt very bad because he had already been offered four times what we were paying. But we explained to him as it is so often explained to you in France, that business is business.

In the open taxi the wind caught the big canvas as though it were a sail and we made the taxi driver crawl a long. At home we hung it and everyone looked at it and was very happy. I would not trade it for any picture in the world. Miró came in and looked at it and said, " I am very content that you have *The Farm* ".

When I see him now he says, " I am always content, tu sais, that you have *The Farm* ".

It has in it all that you feel about Spain when you are there and all that you feel when you are away and cannot go there. No one else has been able to paint these two very opposing things. Although Juan Gris painted it how it is when you know that you will never go there. Picasso is very different. Picasso is a business man. So were some of the greatest painters that ever lived. But this is too long now and the thing to do is look at the picture : not write about it.