

FANCY with **erma**
FISTE

"Just think," I said to the girl sitting beside me, "a few more years and I'll be going to Rike's 20-Year Club dinner." "How many," said my companion, stifling a yawn at my stimulating conversation. "A few," I replied flippantly. "How many," she persisted. "19," I coughed inaudibly into my handkerchief. Amid her laughter, I vowed some day I would make her eat those insidious words.

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1966 certainly was a good year for Rike's I mused as I rigged up the motor of my helicopter in preparation to fly down to Second and Main Streets. Turning on the television set I watched Rike's new broadcast, "Sophie Whistlestop—Girl Brakeman," becoming so engrossed I nearly ran through a red light. (The only thing time does not do away with.)

Setting the aircraft on Rike's modern roof, I noted that it had taken me six minutes to get to work. Ah well, so it did take a little longer than usual—probably needed a new propeller blade or something.

Stepping onto the escalator, I got off at my floor and entered my office. Pressing the button, the hall tree with great mechanical arms took my hat and coat and I sat down at my desk.

I picked up my fountain pen to sign some letters. Pretty neat, this pen. The salesman said it would positively not write under water. Something like that could revolutionize retailing, I thought. The doorway lit up and through the magic eye which enabled me to view my callers without them suspecting it, I saw my secretary. She entered, took off her hat and coat, gave the mechanical hall tree a begrudging look, and threw her things over a chair. Old fashioned, I contemplated. Probably still clung to the old fashioned era of automobiles and atomic energy.

I looked at the miniature sun dial which was now included as a part of every desk. I was past due.

The dining room was filled with people . . . people all familiar to me, who 20 years ago worked as stock boys and clericals that no one ever heard of. Now, they were buyers and department heads with responsibilities on their shoulders.

I sat down by one of the buyers. "Just think," I said, "a few more years and I'll be going to Rike's 25-Year Club dinner." "How many," she asked. I scrutinized her closely. "Er . . . a . . . five years." Amid her laughter I screamed, "Oh no! Not again!"