

## Sidney

Sidney always felt shortchanged by life. Yes, he had a fine, loving wife and eventually two sons. But he wanted to go to college, make something of himself. Instead, as jobs were scarce, he and his two brothers formed a jewelry business, making rings. Sidney created the gold and silver rings, his two brothers were the 'setters,' putting jewels onto the rings. Sidney did not make nearly as much money just making the rings, which took longer. It did not feel right, but he got along with his brothers, they played hearts every Friday night, so Sidney went along. He wrote little stories he never sent anywhere.

Eventually the brothers retired the business. One of the kids was already out of the house, at college. Sidney wondered what to do. He took up painting, oil painting, learned from books. He copied old masters, Rembrandt and Renoir and others, learning to duplicate their colours, lighting and styles. Eventually, Sidney had created a large number of paintings. He could not take them to a gallery or agent, being copies, so he took them straight to the public. Next Sunday he took the framed oil paintings to the local flea market. He put them up proudly and sat waiting for buyers. He waited all day. Then he took the paintings home.

It was crushing.

He knew the paintings were good. Were they good if no one else agreed? Was he fooling himself? It was not that they were copies—people hung copies on their walls all the time. But they looked at his work and never even asked a question. He was insecure to begin with, the flea market confirmed it, he never painted again.

He took up woodworking.

He died from congestive heart failure after carrying home the Sunday **New York Times**, on the porch, in his wife's arms.