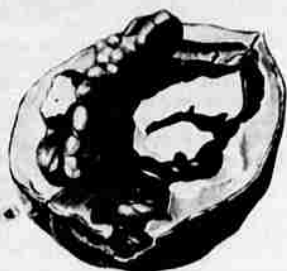


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FEEN-A-MINT.

The Chewing-Gum Laxative

DOES WAKING UP NIGHTS MAKE YOU FEEL OLD

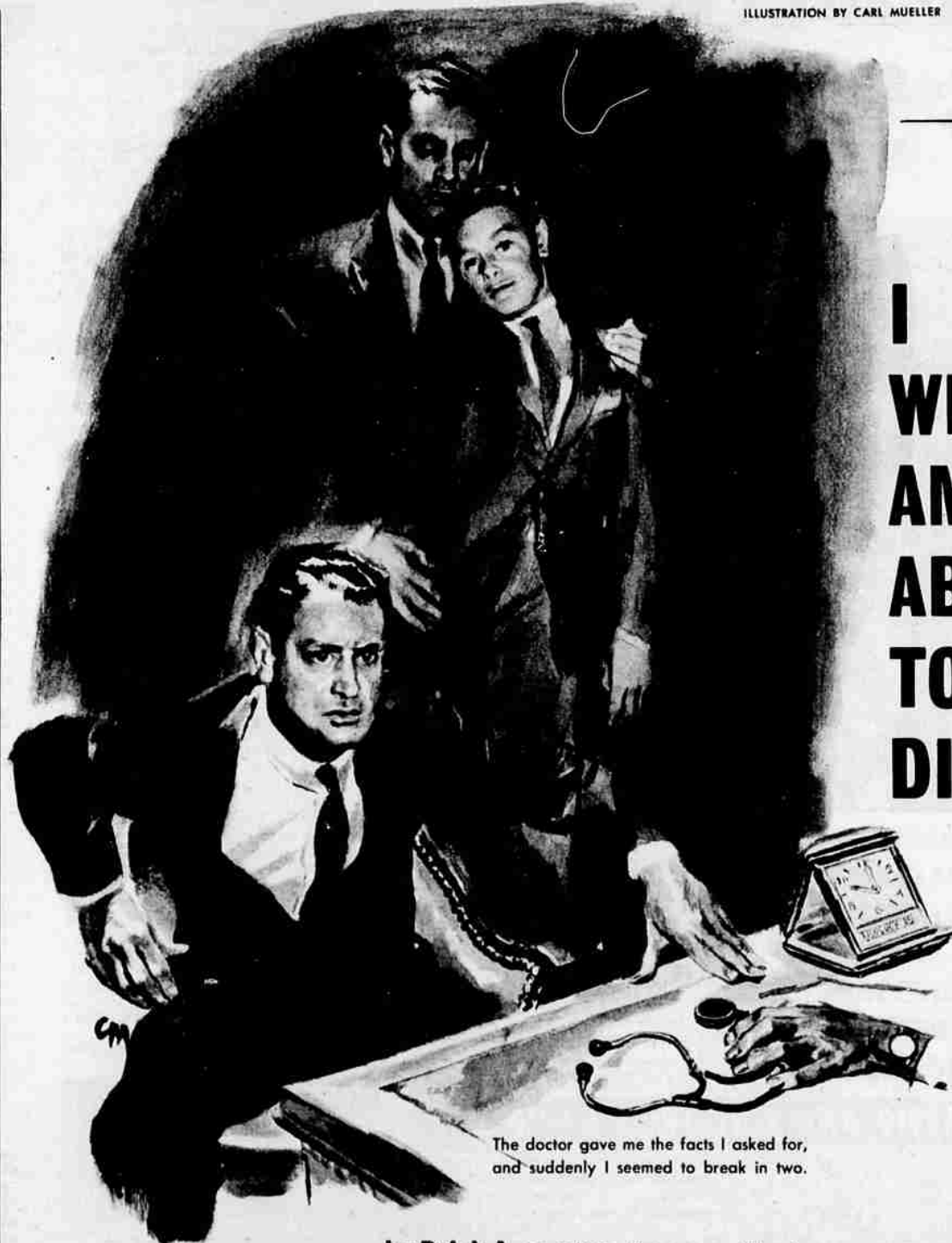
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ILLUSTRATION BY CARL MUELLER



I WHO AM ABOUT TO DIE

The doctor gave me the facts I asked for,
and suddenly I seemed to break in two.

by Ralph A. as told to Francesca Liberte

(While researching an article on leukemia, Miss Liberte learned of a prominent New York advertising executive who had become afflicted with the disease and was told he had only a short time to live. He was still carrying out his important responsibilities when she visited him, but he took time out for this interview in which he freely discussed his condition and his reaction to the "death sentence.")

YOU BREAK right in two. A few seconds before, you were sitting across the desk from the doctor, all in one piece, just as you came in. You start to tell him not to beat around the bush. You are a hardheaded businessman. You want the facts.

But you don't say anything, because suddenly you hear what he is really saying although he doesn't use the exact words. You know enough about leukemia to know that you

have about six months to live. Or less. This sinks in—and you break in two. One of you listens, even asks questions. The other spins around inside your head, trying to get things back into focus.

You think you're dreaming and any moment will wake up. You wonder if in some farfetched way the doctor is joking with you. But you know he isn't.

All right, you say. Suppose I do have only six months to live. If I am going to die, I can try to make this the most important period of my life. Most people are half dead most of their lives anyway. In a rut, day in, day out, waiting for something that never happens. Finally, through sheer old age if nothing else, they too have only six months to live. But they don't know it.

I'd always been the "never-sick-a-day-in-my-life" sort. An early riser, singing in the shower, full of energy right off