

## BISHOP INTO STONE

. . . **T**HE TWO-TON bishop soon will shift his immense white Vermont marble bulk from a Huntington avenue studio filled with Victorian devils, saints and gargoyles in plaster to his final resting place in an old whaling captain's New Bedford parlor. And if you think all of this is incongruous, you just haven't met Senhor Agostinho Rodrigues, a Portuguese sculptor who is artfully taking Boston by storm.

Rodrigues, a self-admitted genius quite ready to prove his right to a niche in the Hall of Fame through an evening's run of Port and argument, will be exceedingly happy when the symbolical likeness of dark-skinned Bishop Charles Manuel Grace, spiritual leader of 4,000,000 American Negroes who have resisted or transferred their allegiance from Father Divine, is off his long-fingered hands.

For then this personable young man with wavy black hair, soulful brown eyes that sparkle as he talks and that therefore sparkle most of the time, and an amiable habit of displaying without pressure an apparently inexhaustible fount of ideas concerning all the arts and not a little philosophy, will be able to turn to a slightly larger task, that of carving Boston Town to his own taste.

Rodrigues, scion of the hot-tempered Madeira Islands, is certain that he has something as ardent as the island wine to give this, his temporarily adopted city.

"Hombre, I do not expect to make money here," he declares, with appropriate gestures. "My stomach, the primary concern of the modern artist, is sure to be full for the next year. Therefore I am without worry. I am even disposed to be generous. I want to spend \$10,000 of my own money on free lessons to children, or on constructive talks to convicts and others who might be making artificial limbs for returning soldiers, or on exhibits for galleries and museums which once were living and now are close to death.

"And what if nobody wants to listen to my theories, what if no one wants to see my creations? Very well,

I will sit with them in the public parks; the passersby will have to look and learn.

"And if I make enemies, well, if you are surrounded by people who always say 'Yes,' who agree with you always, then you die.

"I will not die."

Now let us examine how Agostinho Rodrigues, the voluble, the volatile, the impressionable one, got that way.

First of all, bear in mind that he is no Salvador Dali. Though ebullient to an almost breath-taking degree, he is above all pranks in art. He abhors what he calls "Cubismo," a freakish cult that he considers to have been invented for failures. There is true intellect behind his art. If nobody wishes to look and to understand, so much the worse for them. The artist is not above hawling them out for their abysmal ignorance. . . .

"Tino" Rodrigues started his artistic career in Madeira by selling in-

sular knickknacks and self-modelled fishes and animals. A lad of considerable push—so that he now looks back upon himself as "the most objectionable boy ever born on the island"—he was not above pulling prospective customers' coattails and hobbleskirts to attract attention to his wares.

Of these days he now says, "Why shouldn't I admit that I was a boy selling things on the streets? That was my masterpiece. For if a man once shined shoes and rose to become a great artist, it shows that he deserves fame, that he has a right to be somebody."

One day a German-Jewish scientist sent to the island by the Portuguese government to re-organize Madeira's zoological exhibits felt a tremendous tug at his own coattails. He turned round and saw little Rodrigues, who even at that time would not admit himself to be small.

It may have been those sparkling eyes, or perhaps the ingeniously contrived sculpture on Tino's tray. At any rate, the boy became the protege



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Agostinho Rodrigues

of the German, Dr. Gunther Maul, and for eight years he looked up to the man as his master.

Intensive instruction propelled Tino to Lisbon, where, with his natural verve and gusto, he arrived with something of the force of a tidal wave. The national house of art, Museo de Bocage, took him up. The University of Oporto sent him to London to enter a competition to model fish and animals for the British Museum. He won. Then he did T. S. Eliot, the Anglicized poet; Lord Lloyd, late minister of colonies, and various Chelsea, Soho and Piccadilly celebrities.

This success almost miraculously led to a government scholarship to study in America. For seven months, with a somewhat canny idea that he would improve his own art thereby, Tino Rodrigues worked free of charge for Roy Chapman Andrews in Manhattan's Museum of Natural History. "I would do anything from scrubbing floors, skinning crocodiles to stuffing dinosaurs," he says.

Then wealthy Bishop Grace, a character as prodigious as his statue, got hold of Tino through some mutual New Bedford friends for the creation of the little parlor ornament. Seven months ago, the artist came to Boston, hired space in the archaic, model-filled architectural firm of John Evans in Huntington Avenue, and started pruning four tons of marble into a two-ton effigy of the African ecclesiastic.

It is a remarkable piece, no matter which way you look at it. And slightly awkward to handle.



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The mentor of his devout flock is shown with flowing locks, a spiritual expression and the symbolic head of a young girl at his right marsupial side. Rodrigues considers the piece to be his true masterpiece, and he is probably right. At any rate, the bishop is crazy about it. He can hardly wait to have it installed in the parlor of the "palace" he recently purchased, at \$20,000 plus, in conservative old New Bedford.

Although Tino thinks that he will try miniature sharks the next time, a two-ton statue has hardly staggered him. He is perfectly willing to sit with one in his lap in Boston's Public Garden.

He has planned a monumental assembly of many such pieces in memory of Dr. Rafael Trujillo, late president of the Dominican Republic. This affair would fill not an entire parlor but an entire Dominican city square. More than anything, it would be a true token of the gigantic imagination of Senhor Agostinho Rodrigues.

— LAWRENCE DAME.

## THE OLD DOG'S DAY

. . . AN ECCENTRIC CHARACTER in a certain town suffered being bitten by a dog.

Too late, the dog, being ordered shot and his brain examined, was pronounced to have had rabies.

Nothing could be done for the victim, so it was the duty of the doctor to tell the man that he would die of hydrophobia before many days.

The poor old fellow took the bad news most strangely. Not as a stunning blow, but, seemingly, as something he almost welcomed.

For days he wandered about the town with a notebook and a pencil in his hands. Now and then he would stop before a house and set down something in the book.

Finally a fellow townsman, greatly pitying and still more curious, asked him what he was doing. He guessed he was collecting the names and addresses of friends whom he wanted invited to his funeral.

"No. No, it ain't that," explained the queer old one. "I'm making up a list of people I'm goin' to bite."

— M. M. KINNEY