LAST PROSE OF SUMMERS

Summers Sees A Strange Stroller

By ED SUMMERS

THE NIGHT was very foggy and the hour very late. We were ambling away from Jones College in the general direction of our pad when a voice called out, "Hey!"

WE STOPPED and found ourselves in the center of the academic quadrangle. "Hey!" the voice said. "Take this book, will you? I'd like to get down off this chair."

WE TOOK the book before doing a double take. "Er—Sir, are you—ah—sure you're able to get down—by yourself, that is?"

THE OLD MAN allowed that he was, and shortly he was standing beside us, brushing his clothes and rubbing his hands. We asked him if he did this with any regularity. "No," was the answer. "I used to pretty often, but last year and this year have been the first times for a good while."

"AGE?" WE questioned, realizing that this particular gentleman would be close to a hundred and fifty.

"NO," he snorted. "I get around as well as you do—better, maybe." We caught a sly wink. "I only get down when you young kids have a certain attitude—or spirit; you seem to have it only during the fall, and then just certain years. It's very strong just now."

"WELL—ER, what do you do—when you get down sir, I mean?" We asked, changing the subject.

"Walk. Get exercise. Gets cramped on that chair. Think they'd give a body a chair with some cushions in it if they expect him to sit in it this long. And call me Willie—I'm not used to this 'sir' stuff."

HE WALKED a few steps before he continued. "It got barrassing, though—you'd be surprised how many other people take walks around here late at night—and none of them seemed glad to see me...!"

"Do people ever talk to you, Sir—ah, Willie?"

"ONLY if they don't see me too well, I quit carrying that book around years ago—dead giveaway, you know."

Willie looked ill at ease, so I asked him if he enjoyed football games. "Well," he began, "It's nice to win more than just moral victories. And, I do appreciate getting about two years in a row like this."

HE STOPPED and looked around, puzzled. "I think I'm lost. My marsh has been changed so, I scarcely recognize it any more."

"I GOT into a new building—sat down with some kids in a room—some young fellow came and started talking. I tried to listen, but I haven't heard such hooey since the Allen Brothers tried to sell me Hempstead back in '55..."

"1855?"

"...1855, so I went back to my chair right then and didn't set down for five years. I've stayed away from the buildings since." HE OPINED that he'd like to get back to his chair and read some more, so we went back. As he was getting settled, I asked if he got much rest.

"Too many interesting things to see. But some people have no respect—paint, wreaths with thorns in them—and they never give me new books to read. I learned how to sleep sitting up thirty years ago—but I'm going to have to learn all over now. They sound bells behind my back every fifteen minutes, and it's very inconvenienceing. Well, good night, fella. Come see me again."

"Yeah, Willie. Good night."