

SYNOPSIS

I-APRIL.-General factotum in the house of her sister Ina, wife of Herbert Deacon, in the small town of Warbleton Lulu Bett leads a dull, cramped existence, with which she is constantly at enmity, though apparently satisfied with her lot. She has natural thoughts and aspirations which neither her sister nor her brotherin-law seemingly can comprehend. To Mr. Deacon comes Bobby Larkin, recently graduated high-school youth, secretly enamored of Deacon's elder daughter, Diana, an applicant for a "job" around the Deacon house. He is engaged, his occupation to be to keep the lawn in trim. The family is excited over the news of an approaching visit from Deacon's brother years. Deacon jokes with Lulu, with subtle meaning, concerning the coming meeeting.

But one would say that nothing but the truth dwelt in Bobby.

"Oh, hullo," said he. "No. I came to see your father."

He marched by her. His hair stuck up at the back. His coat was hunched about his shoulders. His insufficient nose, abundant, loose-lipped mouth and brown eyes were completely expressionless. He marched by her without a glance.

She flushed with vexation. Mr. Deacon, as one would expect, laughed loudly, 'took the situation in his elephantine grasp and pawed at it.

"Mamma! Mamma! What do you s'pose? Di thought she had a beau-' "Oh, papa!" said Di. "Why, I just hate Bobby Larkin and the whole school knows it."

Mr. Deacon returned to the dining room, humming in his throat. He entered upon a pretty scene.

His Ina was darning. Four minutes of grace remaining to the child Monona, she was spinning on one toe with some Bacchanalian idea of making the most of the present. Di dominated, her ruffles, her blue hose, her bracelet, her ring.

"Oh and mamma," she said, "the sweetest party and the dearest supper and the darlingest decorations and the gorgeousest-"

tion. "It came this mcrning. I forgot.'

"I forgot it too! And I laid it up there." Lulu was eager for her share of the blame.

"Isn't it understood that my mail can't wait like this?" Dwight's sense of importance was

now being fed in gulps. "I know. I'm awfully sorry," Lulu said, "but you hardly ever get a let-

ter-' This might have made things worse, but it provided Dwight with a greater importance.

"Of course, pressing matter goes to my office," he admitted it. "Still, my mail should have more careful-" He read, frowning. He replaced the

letter, and they hung upon his motions as he tapped the envelope and regarded them. "Now !" said he. "What do you

think I have to tell you?" "Something nice," Ina was sure.

"Something surprising," Dwight said portentiously. "But, Dwight-is it nice?" from his

Ina. "That depends. I like it. So'll Lulu." He leered at her. "It's com-

nany." "Oh, Dwight," said Ina. "Who?" "From Oregon," he said, toying with is suspense

"Your brother!" cried Ina. "Is he oming?

"Yes. Ninian's coming, so he says." "Ninian !" cried Ina again. She was excited, round-eyed, her moist lips parted. Dwight's brother Ninian. How long was it? Nineteen years. South America, Central America, Mexico, Panama "and all." When was he coming and what was he coming for?

"To see me," said Dwight. "To meet you. Some day next week. He don't know what a charmer Lulu is, or he'd come quicker."

Lulu flushed terribly. Not from the Implication. But from the knowledge that she was not a charmer.

The clock struck. The child Monona uttered a cutting shriek. Herbert's eyes flew not only to the child but to his wife. What was this, was

ed, dusted, set it back, less as a process than as an experience. As she dusted the mirror and saw his trim semblance over against her own bodiless reflection, she hurried away. But the eyes of the picture followed her, and she liked it.

She dusted the south window sill and saw Bobby Larkin come round the house and go to the woodshed for the lawn mower. She heard the smooth blur of the cutter. Not six times had Bobby traversed the lawn when Lulu saw Di emerge from the house. Di had been caring for her canary and she carried her bird bath and went to the well, and Lulu divined that Di had deliberately disregarded the handy kitchen taps. Lulu dusted the south window and watched, and in her watching was no quality of spying or of criticism. Rather, she looked out on something in which she had never shared, could not by any chance imagine herself sharing.

The south windows were open. Airs of May bore the soft talking.

"Oh, Bobby, will you pump while I hold this?" And again: "Now wait till I rinse" And again: "You needn't be so glum -- the village salutation signifying kindly attention.

Bobby now first spoke: "Who's glum?" he countered, gloomily.

The iron of those days when she had laughed at him was deep within him. and this she now divined, and said absently:

"I used to think you were pretty nice. But I don't like you any more." "Yes, you used to!" Bobby repeated derisively. "Is that why you made

fun of me all the time?" At this Di colored and tapped her

foot on the well-curb. He seemed to have her now, and enjoyed his triumph. But Di looked up at him shyly and looked down. "I had to," she admitted. "They were all teasing me about you."

"They were?" This was a new thought to him. Teasing her about him, were they? He straightened. "Huh!" he said, in magnificent evasion

"I had to make them stop, so l teased you. I-I never wanted to." Again the upward look.

"Well!" Bobby stared at her. "I never thought it was anything like that.'

"Of course you didn't." She tossed back her bright hair, met his eyes full. "And you never came where I could tell you. I wanted to tell you." She ran into the house.

Lulu lowered her eyes. It was as if she had witnessed the exercise of some secret gift, had seen a cocoon open or an egg hatch. She was thinking:

"How easy she done it. Got him right over. But how did she do that?" Dusting the Dwight-like piano, Lulu looked over-shoulder, with a manner of speculation, at the photograph of Ninian.

Bobby mowed and pondered. The magnificent conceit of the male in his understanding of the female character was sufficiently developed to cause bracket, stretching up her long body him to welcome the improvisation which he had just heard. Perhaps that was the way it had been. Of feet. Lulu's feet gave news of some course that was the way it had been. What a fool he had been not to understand. He cast his eyes repeatedly

mought about the brightness of that Chautauqua scene to which Ina and Dwight had gone. Lulu thought about such gatherings in somewhat the way that a futurist receives the subjects of his art-forms not vague, but heightened to intolerable definiteness, acute color, and always motion-motion as an integral part of the desirable. But a factor of all was that Lulu herself was the participant, not the onlooker. The perfection of her dream was not impaired by any longing. She had her dream as a saint her sense of heaven.

"Lulie!" her mother called. "You come out of that damp."

She obeyed, as she had obeyed that voice all her life. But she took one last look down the dim street. She had not known it, but superimposed on her Chautauqua thoughts had been her faint hope that it would be tonight, while she was in the garden alone, that Ninian Deacon would arrive. And she had on her wool chally, her coral beads, her cameo pin. .

She went into the lighted dining room. Monona was in bed. Di was not there. Mrs. Bett was in Dwight Herbert's leather chair and she lolled at her ease. It was strange to see this woman, usually so erect and tense, now actually lolling, as if lolling were the positive, the vital, and her ordinary rigidity a negation of her. In some corresponding orgy of leisure and liberation. Lulu sat down with no needle.

"Inie ought to make over her delaine," Mrs. Bett comfortably began. They talked of this, devised a mode, recalled other delaines. "Dear, dear," said Mrs. Bett, "I had on a delaine when I met your father." She described it. Both women talked freely, with animation. They were individuals and alive. To the two pallid beings accessory to the Deacons' presence, Mrs. Bett and her daughter Lulu now bore no relationship. They emerged, had opinions, contradicted, their eyes were bright.

Toward nine o'clock Mrs. Bett announced that she thought she should have a lunch. This was debauchery. She brought in bread and butter, and a dish of cold canned peas. She was committing all the excesses that she knew-offering opinions, laughing, eating. It was to be seen that this woman had an immense store of vitality, perpetually submerged.

When she had eaten she grew sleepy -rather cross at the last and inclined to hold up her sister's excellencies to Lulu; and, at Lulu's defense lifted an ancient weapon.

"What's the use of finding fault with Inie? Where'd you been if she hadn't married?"

Lulu said nothing. "What say?" Mrs. Bett demanded shrilly. She was enjoying it. Lulu said no more. After a long

time: "You always was jealous of Inie," said Mrs. Bett, and went to her bed. As soon as her mother's door had

"I'll bet you do," said Ninian, and did not perceive that anything had been violated. "What's your name?" he bethought.

She was in an immense and obscure excitement. Her manner was serene, her hands as they went on with the peeling did not tremble; her replies were given with sufficient quiet. But she told him her name as one tells something of another and more remote creature. She felt as one may feel in catastrophe-no sharp understanding, but merely the sense that the thing cannot possibly be happening.

"You folks expect me?" he went on. "Oh, yes!" she cried, almost with vehemence. "Why, we've looked for you every day."

"'See," he said, "how long have they been married?" Lulu flushed as she answered: "Fif-

teen years." "And a year before that the first one died-and two years they were married," he computed. "I never met that fore good prices can be expected. Buyone. Then it's close to twenty years ers want value for their money. since Bert and I have seen each

other." "How awful !" Lulu said, and flushed fair price. In order to supply eggs of again.

"Why?"

"To be that long away from your folks."

Suddenly she found herself facing this honestly, as if the immensity of her present experience were clarifying her understanding: Would it be so awful to be away from Bert and Monona and Di-yes, and Ina, for twenty

years? "You think that?" he laughed. "A man don't know what he's like till he's roamed around on his own." He liked moisture and adding fertility. Cultithe sound of it. "Roamed around on vate frequently and water artificially his own," he repeated, and laughed in case of dry weather. again. "Course a woman don't know that.'

balanced a pie on her hand and carved the crust. She was stupefied to hear If second growth meadow is handy, it her own question. "Why don't she?" might be desirable to purchase light "Maybe she does. Do you?" "Yes," said Lulu.

"Good enough !" He applauded noiselessly, with fat hands. His diamond ring sparkled, his even white teeth flashed. "I've had twenty years of galloping about," he informed her, unable, after all, to transfer his interests from himself to her.

"Where?" she asked, although she knew.

"South America. Central America. never in her life had the least desire

to see any of these places. She did not want to see them now. But she wanted passionately to meet her companion's mind.

"It's the life," he informed her. "Must be," Lulu breathed. "!-" She tried, and gave it up.

"Where you been mostly?" he asked at last.

By this unprecedented interest in her doings she was thrown into a pas-"Here," she said. "I've always been here. Fifteen years with Ina. Before that we lived in the country." He listened sympathetically now, his head well on one side. He watched her veined hands pinch at the pies. "Poer old girl." he was thinking.

FARM NOTES.

-New York has 7620 acres of late onions this year, which is the largest acreage of any State in the Union.

-Mature sows which fail to raise litters of six good pigs should ordinarily be fattened and slaughtered.

-There is no branch of agriculture that takes as little fertility from the soil and at the same time returns as good profit as the dairy farm.

-A good farmer watches the plants and takes notice of the soil. He can tell what the soil needs from the color, the growth, the development and the fruitfulness.

-Colorado has the largest acreage of cantaloupes with 16,000 as compar-ed with 8200 acres last year. Our neighbor, Maryland, has 6310 acres, compared with 5480 acres last year.

-Good products must be raised, harvested at the right stage of ripeness, and delivered in an attractive, sound and serviceable condition be-

-Eggs that Demand the Price.-A good product will always demand a top quality, dispose of the male birds and produce sterile eggs. Provide clean nests, one to every five hens.

-Save on your fertilizer bill by buying mixtures with high analysis. Low grade fertilizers containing varying quantities of filler are no less ex-pensive per pound of plant food con-tained, than the high grade mixtures. Order early.

-Celery should be growing nicely now if sufficient moisture is always available. Mulching with manure is an excellent method of conserving

-Present indications are that prices for feeder cattle will rule higher "Why don't she?" asked Lulu. She this fall than a year ago, due to the shortage of cattle in the grazing area. cattle during the month of August and allow them the use of such fields.

-Where pastures are getting shorter and dryer, the cow will repay her owner at the pail for an extra al-lowance of grain in her manger when she comes in from the field. A good mixture is, 150 lbs. oats, or corn and cob meal, 100 lbs. bran, 100 lbs. linseed meal, and 75 lbs. cottonseed meal.

-It is never too early to get your wheat seed. Obtain good clean seed of "South America. Central America. Mexico. Panama." He searched his memory. "Colombo," he superadded. "My!" said Lulu. She had probably never in her life had the least desire phosphate or a 2-12-2 mixture, according to the condition of your soil.

-Dwarf Essex rape may be sown in late summer or early fall and the hogs given a fine start toward fatten-ing. By turning pigs to rape a month or six weeks they may be easily and cheaply finished. An acre of rape should carry from 20 to 30 pigs for several weeks. Sow on rich land five pounds of seed broadcast to the acre. The soil should be prepared well and sowing done in late summer or very early -The fly menace is a very serious handicap to dairymen or farmers keeping dairy cows. These pests always reduce the milk flow at this season of the year, unless something is done to check their depredations. A very good spray is made as follows: Kerosene oil, 3 quarts; raw linseed oil, 16 ounces; pine tar, 8 ounces; crude carbolic acid, 8 ounces. This will make one gallon of spray that will not injure the cows. Spray night and morning with a small hand sprayer like those used in the poultry yard. -Pennsylvania cities, including towns and suburbs of cities, supply over 60 per cent. of the students in the school of agriculture of The Pennsylvania State College, according to information given out by Dean R. L. Watts. A study just completed shows that boys reared on the farm constitute but 39 per cent. of the enrollment in the school. Only about 35 per cent. of the students in agriculture are the sons of farmers. The fathers of the remaining 65 per cent. were found to be merchants, clerks, tradesmen, teachers, ministers, musicians, or research workers. Two hundred freshmen are to be admitted to the agricultural school this fall and the quota is not yet filled, according to Professor A. H. Espenshade, college registrar. -Agronomists in the school of agculture and the agriculture extension department at State College have been conducting an inspection of Pennsyl-vania 44 wheat fields in several counties of the State, to get records of those farms that will serve as sources of seed for next season. The survey included 109 farms in fifteen counies, and represented a total of 1259 acres, or about one-eighth of the total Pennsylvania 44 acreage. In at least 90 per cent. of the fields, the examination showed the wheat to be relatively free of mixtures and of weeds, such as garlic, cockle and quack grass. Most of the inspected wheat, when harvested and thoroughly cleaned was fit for seed. In their examination of fileds, the specialists rejected those that contained garlic or quack grass, and any that "From showed more than a trace of cheat or cockle. When evidence of scab, or loose smut, was found, a rigid exam-"You bet! Oh, you bet!" he cried. | ination was made to determine wheth-"Never doubted it." He made his er the infestation was sufficiently great to disqualify the wheat for seed puposes. The least amount of stinking smut in a field was enough to bar Lulu glowed, quickened, smiled. Her it from consideration as a seed field. In one instance, where black rust was found, the specialist located a barberry bush near by and suggested its removal. All in all, the survey credits Pennsylvania 44 with a very good record. sured her. "Say, by George, I never It has outyielded most every other vathought of that before! There's no riety by at least five bushels, and if its telling whether a man's married or use were to spread to the entire wheat acreage of the State, the increase in yield would boost the value of the crop by several million dollars. Since 1918, when the college distributed the first seed of this variety, the acreage has grown from a limited number of selected fields to 10,000 acres during the past year.

r, gra Herbert Deacon. He was not sure what he meant, but the good fellow felt some violence done somewhere or other.

"Well," said Di positively, "they were. Papa, see my favor."

She showed him a sugar dove, and he clucked at it.

Ina glanced at them fondly, her face assuming its loveliest light. She was often ridiculous, but always she was the happy wife and mother, and her role reduced her individual absurdities at least to its own.

The door to the bedroom now opened and Mrs. Bett appeared.

"Well, mother !" cried Herbert, the "well" curving like an arm, the "mother" descending like a brisk slap. "Hungry now?"

Mrs. Bett was hungry now. She had emerged intending to pass through the room without speaking and find food in the pantry. By obscure processes her son-in-law's tone inhibited all this.

"No," she said. "I'm not hungry." Now that she was there, she seemed uncertain what to do. She looked from one to another a bit hopelessly, somehow foiled in her dignity. She brushed at her skirt, the veins of her long, wrinkled hands catching an intenser blue from the dark cloth. She put her hair behind her ears.

"We put a potato in the oven for you," said Ina. She had never learned quite how to treat these periodic refusals of her mother to eat, but she never had ceased to resent them. "No, thank you," said Mrs. Bett.

Evidently she rather enjoyed the situation, creating for herself a spotlight much in the manner of Monona.

"Mother," said Lulu, "let me make you some toast and tea."

Mrs. Bett turned her gentle, bloodless face toward her daughter, and her eyes warmed.

"After a little, maybe," she said. "I think I'll run over to see Grandma Gates now," she added, and went toward the door.

"Tell her," cried Dwight, "tell her she's my best girl."

Grandma Gates was a rheumatic cripple who lived next door, and whenever the Deacons or Mrs. Betts were angry or hurt or wished to escape the house for some reason, they stalked over to Grandma Gates-in lieu of, say, slamming a door. These visits radiated an almost daily friendliness which lifted and tempered the old invalid's lot and life.

Di flashed out at the door again, on some trivial permission.

"A good many of mamma's stitches in that dress to keep clean," Ina called after.

"Early, darling, early !" her father reminded her. A faint regurgitation of his was somehow invested with the paternal.

"What's this?" cried Dwight Herbert Deacon abruntly.

On the clock shelf lay a letter. "Oh, Dwight !" Ina was all compunc-

their progeny hurt?

"Bedtime," his wife elucidated, and added: "Lulu, will you take her to bed? I'm pretty tired."

Lulu rose and took Monona by the hand, the child hanging back and shaking her straight hair in an unconvincing negative.

As they crossed the room, Dwight Herbert Deacon, strolling about and snapping his fingers, halted and cried out sharply:

"Lulu. One moment !"

He approached her. A finger was extended, his lips were parted, on his forehead was a frown.

"You picked the flower on the piant?" he asked, incredulously.

Lulu made no reply. But the child Monona felt herself lifted and borne to the stairway and the door was shut with violence. On the dark stairway Lulu's arms closed about her in an embrace which left her breathless and squeaking. And yet Lulu was not really fond of the child Monona, either. This was a discharge of emotion akin, say, to slamming the door.

11

May.

Luiu was dusting the parlor. The parlor was rarely used, but every morning it was dusted. By Lulu. She dusted the black walnut center table which was of Ina's choosing, and looked like Ina, shining, complacent, abundantly curved. The leather rocker, too, looked like Ina, brown, plumply upholstered, tipping back a bit. Really, the davenport looked like Ina, for its chintz pattern seemed to bear a design of lifted eyebrows and arch, reproachful eyes.

Lulu dusted the upright piano, and that was like Dwight-in a perpetual attitude of rearing back, with paws

out, playful, but capable, too, of roaring a ready bass. And the black fireplace-there was

Mrs. Bett to the life. Colorless, fireless, and with a dust of ashes.

In the midst of all was Lulu herself reflected in the narrow pier glass, bodiless-looking in her blue gingham gown, but somehow alive-natural.

This pier glass Lulu approached with expectation, not because of herself but because of the photograph on its low marble shelf. A large photograph on a little shelf-easel. A photograph of a man with evident eyes, evident lips, evident cheeks-and each of the six were rounded and convex. You could construct the rest of him. Down

there under the glass you could imagine him extending, rounded and convex, with plump hands and curly thumbs and snug clothes. It was Ninian

Deacon, Dwight's brother. Every day since his coming had been announced Lulu, dusting the parthat she never went anywhere. lor, had seen the photograph looking at her with its eyes somehow new. Or were her own eyes new? She dusted this photograph with a difference, liftthings with her finger. And she

and her long arms until her skirt lifted to show her really slim and pretty other Lulu, but slightly incarnate. Perhaps, so far, incarnate only in her feet and her long hair.

closed. Lulu took the lamp

She took the lamp to the parlor and stood before the photograph of Niniar. Deacon, and looked her fill. She did not admire the photograph, but she wanted to look at it. .The house was still, there was no possibility of interruption. The occasion became sensation, which she made no effort to quench. She held a rendezvous with she knew not what.

In the early hours of the next afterpoon with the sun shining across the threshold, Lulu was paring something at the kitchen table. Mrs. Bett was asleep. ("I don't blame you a bit, mother." Lulu had said, as her mother named the intention.) Ina was asleep. (But Ina always tock off the curse by calling it her "si-esta," long i.) Monona was playing with a neighbor's child-you heard their shrill yet lovely laughter as they obeyed the adult law that motion is pleasure. Di was not there.

A man came round the house and stood tying a puppy to the porch post. A long shadow fell through the west doorway, the puppy whined.

"Oh," said this man. "I didn't mean to arrive at the back door, but since I'm here-

He lifted a suitcase to the porch. entered and filled the kitchen. "It's Ina, isn't it?" he said.

"I'm her sister," said Lulu, and understood that he was here at last.

Ninian. "So I can come in, can't I?" He did so, turned round like a dog before his chair and sat down heavily,

"Oh, yes," said Lulu. "I'll call Ina.

"Don't call her, then," said Ninian.

He said it absently, hardly looking at her.

spare me a basin," he added. Lulu brought the basin and, while

he went to the dog, she ran tiptoeing to the dining room china closet and brought a cut-glass tumbler, as heavy, as ungainly as a stone crock. This

drained it. "Making pies, as I live," he observed, and brought his chair nearer to the table. "I didn't know Ina had a sister," he went on. "I remember now Bert said he had two of her relatives-

"Is it Miss Lulu Bett?" he abruptly inquired. "Or Mrs.?" Lulu flushed in anguish.

"Miss," she said low, as one who confesses the extremity of failure.



Then, from unplumbed depths, another Lulu abruptly spoke up. choice," she said.

He shouted with laughter.

palms taut and drummed on the table. "Say!" he said.

face was another face. "Which kind of a Mr. are you?" she

heard herself ask, and his shoutings redoubled. Well! Who would have thought it of her?

"Never give myself away," he as not, by his name!"

"It don't matter," said Lulu. "Why not?"

"Not so many people want to know."

(Continued next week).

"Well, I'm Bert's brother," said

forcing his fingers through heavy, upspringing brown hair.

She's asleep."

conscious of planning this, but it was in some manner contrived for him by "Let's you and I get acquainted." forces of his own with which he

seemed to be co-operating without his conscious will. Continually he glanced These glances Lutu saw. She was a

"I'll get the pup a drink if you can woman of thirty-four and Di and Bobby were eighteen, but Lulu felt for

them no adult indulgence. She felt that sweetness of attention which we bestow upon May robins. She felt she filled with milk.

"I thought maybe . . . " said she, and offered it.

called to Di, saying: "Take some out "Thank you !" said Ninian, and to that Bobby Larkin, why don't you?" It was Lulu's way of participating. After supper Dwight and Ina took their books and departed to the Chautauqua circle. To these meetings Lulu never went. The reason seemed to be

Lulu flushed and glanced at him piti-

fully. "He has," she said. "It's my mother and me. But we do quite a good deal of the work."

He Straightened. "Huh!" He Said, In Magnificent Evasion. toward the house. He managed to make the job last over so that he could return in the afternoon. He was not

She cut a fresh cake, filled a plate,

When they were gone Lulu felt an

instant liberation. She turned aim-

lessly to the garden and dug round

It was her vicarious thrill.

toward the house.

more