

LADY LARKSPUR

By MEREDITH NICHOLSON

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CHAPTER V—Continued.

I then jotted down on a scratch pad this memorandum:

"The young woman representing herself as Mrs. Bashford and now established in my uncle's house is one or all of the following persons:

1. Uncle Bash's widow.
2. An impostor.
3. A spy of some sort, pursued by secret agents.
4. Violet Dewing, an actress.
5. The most interesting and the loveliest and most charming girl in the world."

The following day nothing of importance happened, though Alice and Mrs. Farnsworth again spent the morning in the woodland, presumably studying Searles' play. My thoughts galloped through my head in a definite formula: "If she is not my aunt—" "If she is an impostor—" "If she is a spy playing a deep game in the seclusion of Barton—" "If she is the actress Searles is seeking—" At any rate, I would respect her wish to play the game through; the dangers of carrying the story-book idea to one of half a dozen possible conclusions were not inconsiderable, but I was resolved that she should finish the tale in her own fashion.

If I had expected Searles and his play to be introduced into the table-talk, I was doomed to disappointment. A dozen times I smothered an impulse to tell Alice and Mrs. Farnsworth I had watched them in the woodland and of Searles' long search for the ideal of his "Lady Larkspur," but I was afraid to risk their displeasure. They enjoyed walking in the wood, they said, and when I charged them with selfishness in not taking me along, Alice immediately suggested a tramp later in the afternoon.

"I'll send you away after luncheon—I have loads of letters to write, but by four o'clock I'll be keen for the woods again."

"Letters to all my good fairies," she laughed when I went for her; "and you mustn't look at the addresses!" She suggested that we walk to the village, as she liked to post her letters herself. We went through the woods where I had seen her the day before.

"Constance and I were here this morning," she said when we reached the big boulder. "Let me see; I think I'll try a little trick to test the hand of fate. Give me those letters, please. If this falls with address up, I'll mail it," and she chose one and handed me the others; "if the flap side turns up, I'll destroy it."

She sent it spinning into the air. A branch caught and held it an instant, then it fell, turning over and over, and lay straight on edge against a weed.

"No decision!" I cried. "It's an exact perpendicular."

She knelt beside it, pondering. "I think it leans just a trifle to the address side," she announced. "Therefore you may return it to your pocket and it goes into the post office."

"These letters would probably answer a lot of questions for me if I dared run away with them," I suggested.

"The thought does you no credit, sir. You promised not to meddle, but just to let things take their course, and I must say that you are constantly improving. At times you grow suspicious—yes, you know you do—but, take it all in all, you do very well."

At the post office she dropped all the letters but one into the chute. "It really did fall a little to the address side?" she questioned.

I gave my judgment that the letter stood straight on edge, inclining neither way.

"If my life hung in the balance, I should certainly not act where fate had been so timid."

"Suppose," said Alice musingly, "I were to tell you that if I mail this letter the effect will be to detain me in America for some time; if I don't send it, I shall have to write another that will mean that I shall go very soon. If I stay on at Barton instead of going home to take up my little part again for England in the war, it will be an act of selfishness—just some more of my foolishness, more of the make-believe life that Constance and I have been living here."

"I want you to stay," I said earnestly, taking the letter. "Let me be your fate in this—in everything that affects your life forever."

She walked quickly to the door, and I dropped the letter into the chute and hurried after her.

"You didn't turn round," I said as we started down the street. "For all you know, I've got the letter in my pocket."

"Oh, I'm not a bit frightened! It would be just as interesting one way as another."

"But I want you to stay forever," I declared as we waited on the curb for a truck to pass.

"The remark is almost impertinent," she answered, "when I've known you only seven days."

"They've been wonderful days. It really makes no difference about letters or your duties elsewhere. Where you go I shall certainly follow; that's

something I should like to have understood here and now."

Loitering along the beach on our way home, I was guiltily conscious that I was making love rather ardently to a lady who had introduced herself to me as my uncle's widow. The sensation was, on the whole, very agreeable.

"Mr. Torrence and Mr. Raynor," Antoine announced as we were leaving the dinner-table.

"Mr. Raynor?" asked Alice. "Who, pray, is Mr. Raynor?"

Their arrival together chilled me, a chill increased by Torrence's frosty greeting as he gripped my hand angrily and bled in my ear:

"You've deceived me about this whole business! I suggest that you leave the room."

I was walking toward the door when Mrs. Farnsworth protested.

"You are not going? Alice, there is no reason why Mr. Singleton should leave us."

"Of course he is not going," said Alice. She was established at ease in a wicker rocker, unconcernedly playing the ostrich-plume fan.

"There may be matters—" began Torrence.

"Oh, nothing that Bob can't hear!" Alice declared.

"Very well," muttered Torrence frowning his complete disapproval. He fidgeted for a moment and tried to catch Raynor's eye, but Raynor's face expressed amusement. I found myself liking Raynor very much.

"Mr. Raynor told me that he wished to speak to Mrs. Bashford privately," said Torrence. "If he's satisfied, I'm sure I have no objection to Mr. Singleton's remaining. I regret that my own duty is a disagreeable one."

"Really!" murmured Alice with nicely shaded impudence.

"I am convinced, beyond any question," said Torrence, sharply, "that

"That you are endowed with a very unusual personality," continued Raynor, his eyes twinkling. "You are not at all content to remain in that station of life to which you were born; you like playing at being all sorts of other persons. Once, so your friend the ambassador confided to me, you ran away and followed a band of gypsies, which must have been when you were a very little girl."

"I was seven," said Alice, "and the gypsies were nice to me."

"And then you showed talent for the stage—"

"A dreadful revelation!" she exclaimed.

"But you don't know that it was really your father who managed to have Mrs. Farnsworth, one of the most distinguished actresses in England, take charge of you."

"No! Alice never knew that!" said Mrs. Farnsworth, laughing. "I was her chaperon as well as her preceptor, but Alice's father knew that if Alice found it out it would spoil the adventure for her. Alice must do things her own way."

"You are a fraud," said Alice, "but I always suspected you a little."

"Speaking of the stage," resumed Raynor, "it is also a part of my instructions that the Honorable Miss Seabring shall be discouraged from any further adventure in that direction; she's far too talented; there's danger of her becoming a great luminary. In other words, she is not to grace the boards again as Violet Dewing."

Alice's brow clouded, and she turned to me. "That was settled when you mailed that letter for me. It was to make an appointment with an American playwright who wants me to appear in a most adorable comedy."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Trace Pedigree for Centuries.

Speaking of old families and family trees, English and Americans who pride themselves on ancestry have reason to envy the Arabs, many of whom can trace their family line back through many centuries by means of authentic documents. Prof. Talcott Williams, an American who was born and spent his youth in Turkey and has traveled much since in oriental countries, says the descendants of Mohammed are numerous all over the Moslem world—in Arabia, Somaliland and East Africa—and that they prove their line by these records, which they value highly. There are also many descendants of Abu Bekr, the immediate successor of Mohammed. The leading Moslem family in Jerusalem are the Khaldi, descendants of Kalked, who conquered Syria 1,300 years ago and whose descendants have kept their genealogical records intact for all that period.

Sound Advice.

Some young fellows think that it is "smart," "clever," and a sign of bravery to drive near the edge of a precipice; to spend what cash they have freely; and to be a good fellow and take the risk someone else urges upon them. This is the sign of inexperience and lack of real business knowledge and experience. Play safe. Keep clean. Be strong. Be true, and you will never regret it.—Exchange.

"Oh, papa wants me to come home!" cried Alice. "It's droll, Constance, that papa should have thought of making an affair of state of us. Dear papa will always indulge me just so far, and then he becomes alarmed."

"He's certainly alarmed now!" laughed Raynor. "But the ambassador has warned us to be most tactful and circumspect. You may not know that Sir Arnold Seabring is on his way to this country on a confidential mission. That, of course, is not for publication."

"Sir Arnold Seabring?" gasped Torrence.

"The father of the Honorable Miss Seabring," replied Raynor with an elucidating nod toward Alice.

"But how—" I began.

"Mrs. Bashford, the widow of your uncle, is the Honorable Miss Seabring's aunt. Is that quite correct?"

"It is all true," said Alice. "I am a fraud, an impostor. You might go on and say that Mrs. Farnsworth is the wife of Sir Cecil Arrowsmith. But all the guilt is mine. It was my idea to come here and play a little, because I knew Aunt Alice wouldn't mind. She knew just what I meant to do; really she did, Mr. Torrence! In fact, I have her written permission

to use the house; which I should have shown you if we had got in a pinch. But it seemed so much more fun just to let matters take their course. It's a pet theory of mine that life is a dull affair unless we trust to luck a little. After my brother's death I was very unhappy and had gone out East to visit Aunt Alice, who is a great roamer. I thought it would be nice to stop here on the way home, just for a lark, without telling papa, who was frantically cabling me to hurry back to England. This isn't the first time I've played hide-and-seek with my family. I was always doing that as a child; and if it hadn't been for my general waywardness I should never have known you, Constance. Why, I shouldn't have known you, gosh! It has all been so delightful!"

This naive confession amused Raynor greatly, but Torrence was seeing nothing in it but a dangerous escapade.

"In the name of the Balbridge Trust company, I must notify you," he began, "that by representing yourself as another person, entering into possession of a large property—"

"But we've been paying all our own expenses; we haven't taken any money from you," pleaded Alice.

"Of course you wouldn't do such a thing," affirmed Raynor. "My instructions are to give you any sum of money you ask. In fact, the government of the United States is instructed to assume full responsibility for you until your father arrives."

"May I go on and clarify matters for these gentlemen, for Mr. Torrence at least is entitled to a full explanation?"

"Constance," said Alice, turning with a little shrug to her friend, "we have been caught! Our story is being spoiled for us. Please go on, Mr. Raynor. Just what does the American state department have to say about us?"

"That you are endowed with a very unusual personality," continued Raynor, his eyes twinkling. "You are not at all content to remain in that station of life to which you were born; you like playing at being all sorts of other persons. Once, so your friend the ambassador confided to me, you ran away and followed a band of gypsies, which must have been when you were a very little girl."

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(TO BE CONTINUED.)

To Meet Midsummer Needs



AMONG all the charming frocks that have been made to meet the needs of midsummer, it would be hard to find one more excellent in every particular than the novel dress shown here. It begins by fulfilling its mission—which is to look beautifully cool. It is a handsome affair, simply made, but embodying the last word in smart styles; it is an original design and it contrives to be informal enough to prove very useful. One can hardly imagine an occasion where this frock would seem out of place, it will lend itself to all sorts of summer backgrounds.

French blue and white pongee, with embroidery in white, blue and black, has been handled with consummate skill in this masterpiece. White predominates in the skirt, which takes advantage of the vogue for accordion plating and is made with four panels of blue set in it. The texture of pongee silk, like that of georgette, gives

the best effects in accordion plaits; the lines are less hard and rigid than in plain materials.

The skirt is perfectly straight, with three-inch hem at the bottom and a narrow belt.

Blue pongee is used for the blouse and it is cut with short kimono sleeves and arranged to allow for a little drapery about the waist. At each side a row of five silk-covered buttons is set. A little fold of pongee finishes the neck and sleeves and the bottom of the blouse. Above this an effective pattern is embroidered with some blue and a little black introduced in a design of solid figures in white.

A hat of white braid veiled with georgette, canvas shoes with low heels, plain silk stockings, bear out the informal character of the dress. The parasol of white silk with black markings and black handle finishes a costume in which there is nothing that might be improved upon.

Among Gay Party Frocks



EVERYBODY is going somewhere lightful model in which accordion plaits are used to such advantage. A long underskirt is made of the plaited edge at the bottom. Over this a long tunic of fine, net top lace is bordered at the bottom with plain georgette. The under bodice is of plain georgette draped with lace and has elbow sleeves of lace. A full peplum of plaited georgette widens the hips and the plaited georgette makes a finish for the sleeves. There is a slash of wide, soft satin ribbon, like the georgette in color, but in a deeper shade.

In the other dress the skirt is made of lace flouncing and the overgarment of taffeta with corded edges. The bodice is wrinkled over a fitted lining and the skirt draped into panniers. The round neck and short sleeves are finished with net, boucres, bound along the edge with taffeta to make them flare.

The younger women are earnestly engrossed with all their belongings, but their earnestness blossoms into rapture when party frocks come up for consideration. They have a choice that includes quaint and demure styles, borrowed from those of a half century or so ago, or frivolous and sometimes daring modes, sponsored by great French names, or just pretty dresses that do not claim a long lineage—but are zealously satisfied to be American of 1920. One of these youthful and modest frocks appears above, along with a demure pannier dress of taffeta and lace. Either of these is sure to score a triumph when the time comes for its appearance among others of its kind.

Georgette crepe and lace over an underslip of thin silk, make the de-

Julia Bottomly

Perfumed Muslins.

Powderedorris root under the ironing blanket will perfume the muslins that are ironed over it.

The KITCHEN CABINET

One single day is not so much to look upon. There is some way of passing hours of such a limit. We can face a single day; but place too many days before our eyes—Too many days for smothered sighs—And we lose heart just at the start.

—George Kingin.

SWEET SANDWICHES TO TAKE THE PLACE OF CAKE.

A sweet sandwich is a dainty which may be made in an emergency when small cakes are not at hand, and they are always appropriate to serve with lemonade, tea, cocoa or coffee.

Cinnamon Sandwiches.—Use white or Boston brown bread, unbuttered. Mix three tablespoonfuls of granulated sugar with one teaspoonful of cinnamon. Spread a slice with the cinnamon and sugar mixture and cover with a slice well buttered with cream butter. These go well with cocoa.

Date and Orange Sandwiches.—Blend one-half cupful of finely-chopped dates with two tablespoonfuls of orange juice; use on buttered whole wheat bread. These are nice with lemonade.

Coconut Sandwiches.—Take one cupful of freshly grated coconut, one-quarter cupful of walnuts, chopped, one teaspoonful rosewater, one tablespoonful of powdered sugar; mix well; add three tablespoonfuls of thick cream and spread on buttered white bread.

Honey and Pecan Sandwiches.—Mix four tablespoonfuls of honey with two tablespoonfuls of chopped pecans. Split hot baking powder biscuits and fill with the mixture. The biscuits should be baked about an inch thick.

Strawberry Sandwiches.—Take half a cupful of fresh strawberries, cut crosswise into slices. Cream one tablespoonful of butter; add three tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar and spread on slices of unbuttered bread. Lay on the sliced strawberries in a single layer and cover with a slice of buttered bread.

Neapolitan Sandwiches.—Grind three tablespoonfuls of pistachio nuts to a paste. Cut fine three tablespoonfuls of preserved cherries; mix with softened fondant or honey to make of the consistency to spread. Spread on buttered white bread.

Oriental Sandwiches.—Take one-half cupful each of preserved ginger and candied orange peel, chopped fine; mix three tablespoonfuls of thick sweet cream with the fruit and use on white buttered bread.

It is easy to find fault, if one has that disposition. There was once a man who, not being able to find any other fault with his coal, complained that there were too many prehistoric toads in it.—Fudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar.

GOOD THINGS FOR THE FAMILY.

An easy pastry and one which may be kept for several days in the ice chest is prepared as follows: Take

one cupful of lard and one-half cupful of boiling water, add one teaspoonful of salt and stir until the lard is dissolved, then add three cupfuls of sifted flour, mix well and set away to become cool. This makes the crust for three covered pies and the pastry is delicate and tender.

Cherry Sponge.—Take two cupfuls of canned cherries, two eggs, three-fourths of a cupful of sugar, one-fourth of a cupful of hot water, three-fourths of a cupful of flour, one teaspoonful of lemon juice, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder and one-fourth of a teaspoonful of salt. Beat the yolks of the eggs until thick and lemon colored. Add half the sugar gradually and beat until smooth. Add the flour mixed and sifted with the baking powder and salt. Add the whites of the eggs beaten stiff and dry. In the bottom of a buttered baking dish put the cherries. Pour the batter over and bake in a moderate oven forty minutes. If the cherries are tart sprinkle them with sugar before covering them with the batter. The sauce from the fruit will be all that is necessary to serve with the pudding.

Scalloped Noodles.—This is a dish which offers a variety of combinations. Prepare the noodles—those made at home are much better than the carton variety. Take veal and chicken broth with gravy and small pieces of the meat, make layer of the noodles, meat and gravy and finish the top with crumbs. Bake in a hot oven long enough to cook the noodles. Serve hot as a luncheon dish. This is called warmen in Chinese restaurants.

Cherry Cake.—Cream together three tablespoonfuls of shortening and one cupful of sugar; add one egg well beaten and two-thirds of a cupful of milk with two cupfuls of flour alternately, sifting two teaspoonfuls of baking powder and a half teaspoonful of salt. Mix well and cover the top of the cake with a quart of pitted cherries; sprinkle with cinnamon and bake. Half the sugar may be used in the cake, the rest reserved and mixed with the cherries.

Nellie Maxwell