



"THEN HELP ME!"

SYNOPSIS.—Nurses in the Southern hospital at Avonmouth are angered by the insolent treatment accorded them by Dr. John Lancaster, head of the institution, and there is a general feeling of unrest, into which Joan Wentworth, probationary nurse, is drawn. Doctor Lancaster is performing a difficult operation, for which he has won fame. Joan, with other nurses, is in attendance. She is upset, through no fault of her own, and makes a trivial blunder at a critical moment. The patient dies and Doctor Lancaster accuses her of clumsiness. She is suspended, the action meaning the end of her hope of a career as a nurse. Without relatives or friends, and desperate, Joan, urged by her landlady, goes to Doctor Lancaster's office to ask him to overlook her blunder and reinstate her. She overhears a violent altercation between Doctor Lancaster and other men she does not see. Joan is struck by the favorable change in the appearance and demeanor of the doctor, recalling that at times in the hospital he has been gentle and thoughtful and at others imperious and bullying. He tells her he can do nothing for her at the hospital, but offers her a position in a nursing institution in the country, telling her she can be of "great assistance" to him. A man named Myers demands she tell him what the doctor had said to her. She denies him the information, and he covertly threatens her. At the institution, which is owned by Doctor Lancaster, Joan finds Myers. He tells her he is the secretary. She instinctively dislikes and fears him. The only patient at the institution is a Mrs. Dana, demoralized but harmless. Joan is vaguely uneasy, feeling that there is some mystery about the place.

CHAPTER V—Continued

"I thought I heard an auto drive up to the institute last night." Myers looked at her in the same manner. "The doctor came back last night unexpectedly," he said.

"But I thought Doctor Jenkins lived at Millville?"

"Not Jenkins, Miss Wentworth, Doctor Lancaster."

"Why," stammered the girl, "I must have misunderstood, then. I hope Doctor Lancaster is not ill. He was looking unwell when I saw him the day before yesterday."

"That's just what you might have said when I asked you about him," said Myers triumphantly. "Well, Miss Wentworth, if you are going to ask me questions I suppose I can ask you questions."

"If I can answer them."

"Precisely," said the other. "I want to know if you can answer them. Now let's be frank. What do you know about all this?"

"I beg your pardon?" Joan inquired, declining his invitation to seat herself beside him.

"About all this," repeated Myers. "Come, now, you know what I mean as well as I do. How did Doctor Lancaster come to engage you?"

"If you have really a right to know, Mr. Myers," said Joan, "you had better ask Doctor Lancaster himself."

"O, all right," said Myers huffily. "Only the time will come when you'll wish you'd been frank with me. If we put all our cards on the table we can have a frank look into the situation."

"Really, Mr. Myers, I had no idea that I had come to a gambling house," said Joan, more nettled by the familiarity of his tone than by the words. "I have no cards at all, as you term it. I am simply an employee of Doctor Lancaster, and if that is not satisfactory to you I must refer you to him."

Myers grew red. His short, stocky figure with the wide shoulders looked ominously mean as he planted himself upon the porch and surveyed Joan with a furtive, sneering expression. He was not in any sense a gentleman, just a low class of bully, as Joan could plainly see from his gestures, even if his next words had not made this plain.

"So that's your attitude, is it?" he said, jerking out the words between his teeth. "All right, Miss Wentworth, you and I will play our hands separately. Don't come to me afterward, though, and say I didn't warn you. And if you don't like my ways and speech, and think I'm too ordinary for your taste—here comes the doctor! Go and make a complaint about me!"

Joan, turning from the man in disgust, saw Lancaster standing at the door. She went toward him, and then she looked at him in consternation. For Lancaster was undeniably ill. His face was a dead white, and he was leaning on a stick, as if to support himself.

"Doctor Lancaster—" Joan began. He straightened himself with an effort, held out his hand and took her

own. "I am very glad you came, Miss Wentworth," he said. "I hope you like the institute?"

Myers, who had come up and planted himself between them, flung out his challenge.

"She likes the institute all right, doctor," he said, with a short laugh, "but I reckon she don't like me. Bad taste, I call it. What do you say, doctor?"

There was an indescribable insolence in the man's tone. Joan looked for one of Lancaster's explosions of flaming wrath. But to her amazement none came. He seemed struggling to control himself. He flushed and looked from one to the other.

"Well, well, Myers," he said, hesitating, "I think things will turn out all right. Miss Wentworth and you won't conflict in any way. You mustn't quarrel, you know. I want all my employees to like each other," he ended weakly.

And he gave Joan the impression of pitiful impotence, as if he were somehow in the secretary's power and had surrendered his will to him—Lancaster, the tyrant of the Southern hospital, the smug bully of the operating theater! Joan saw a flash of triumph in Myers' eyes, and, with another laugh, the man left them and went into the building.

"I think breakfast is ready, Miss Wentworth," said Lancaster, after a moment, offering the girl his arm.

But Joan gave him hers instead, and they went together into the dining room.

She was glad to see that Myers was not to eat with them. Hungry as she was, she could not have taken breakfast in the man's presence; and even now she could hardly manage to eat, with Lancaster, so evidently ill, seated



"Why, Miss Wentworth—" Stammered the Doctor.

opposite her, swallowing gulps of hot coffee, and making pretense of eating thin strips of toast. His whole demeanor was that of a very ill man. And the transformation terrified her. All her preconceived ideas of him had vanished. She could make nothing of him. She felt a deep sense of relief when the meal ended.

Then Lancaster looked at her with the same furtive expression that she read in the face of everybody there.

"I thought I would run up and see how the institute was getting along, Miss Wentworth," he said.

They had risen from the table. Joan turned and faced him. "Doctor Lancaster," she said, "you spend a good deal of your time here. There was nothing unexpected about your visit last night. You knew that you would come here when you employed me."

She must have spoken more angrily than she knew, for the web of deception was smothering her, and she felt that her position was becoming unendurable. For an instant a glimmer of amusement passed over the doctor's face.

"Why, Miss Wentworth, you are a regular spitfire," he said.

"It is true, then?"

"Well—yes. It is true. My work at Avonmouth is not too exacting for me to come here frequently."

"You knew you were coming, and you did not tell me. And you hinted at a patient requiring care. There is no patient, unless it is yourself, Doctor Lancaster, you engaged me for certain work here, and I am ready to fulfill it. It is not requisite that you should explain anything to me. But please give me the work you hired me to do, and do not try to deceive me."

Lancaster, who had been regarding her intently as she spoke, glanced hurriedly into the hall before replying. A

look of fear had come into his eyes. Joan knew that it was Myers whom he feared. There was something dreadful in seeing this man cringe before the bully, this man who had, in turn, made others cringe before him.

"Miss Wentworth," said Lancaster in a low tone, "believe me, I have no intention of deceiving you. On the contrary, it is my wish to confide in you. Will you come out on the porch and permit me to smoke?"

She bowed, and they went out together. They took their seats upon two chairs at the end of the verandah, Joan purposely seating herself between her companion and the door. She knew why he kept glancing toward it.

"Miss Wentworth," Lancaster began, "we spoke of loyalty the other night. If you saw a human being in trouble of his own making, would it be your impulse to help him, or to leave him to fight his battle alone?"

"I should help him if I could," said Joan.

"Then help me," said Lancaster. "It was myself of whom I spoke to you. Will you help me with loyalty and sympathy, and refuse to be discouraged?"

The girl softened toward him; he was obviously sincere, and obviously distressed. "Gladly, Doctor Lancaster," she answered.

"I thought that I could trust you when I saw your face, and I was sure of it when you talked of your vocation. And I cannot trust anyone else. I have no opportunity—" he broke off irresolutely and then went on, "I have had no opportunity of taking up that matter with the board yet," he continued.

Joan knew that he was not speaking frankly now; but his next words were in the same tone of sincerity.

"Miss Wentworth, that matter and this is all bound up together. You must help me before I can help you, as I said to you when you came into the consulting room. I cannot explain any more now. I want help in the biggest fight of my life, and, if I fail, I want a witness that I have fought. I saw you and thought you would give me your help. For God's sake don't refuse me!"

In spite of his sincerity the idea flashed through Joan's mind that his troubles might be the fancies of a sick man.

"If I discharge you before the month is over, don't go. Refuse to go. Nobody can make you go. I am at the head of the institute. Ignore me. Stay!"

"I'll stay," said Joan, and then, looking at his white face and trembling hands, she thought she knew what was the matter with him.

"Listen, Doctor Lancaster," she began, laying her fingers on his arm. But then she saw that he was not looking at her. He was looking past her toward Myers, who was coming across the pasture toward the entrance. His expression was transformed.

"Miss Wentworth," he said, with a sudden change of tone, "what was I saying to you? I am not myself at all today. I have been greatly overworked, and talking nonsense. Don't remember it. I meant nothing at all. Of course you must remain your month, in case any patients come, and then we'll see what we can do about the position."

And, as Myers came up to them, the same hopeless, cringing expression came into his eyes.

The secretary ignored Joan completely. "Well, doctor," he said, "I have the quarterly statement ready for you. Won't you come and look over it? I must have your signature, and you know how hard it is to fasten you down."

"Yes, I'll come, certainly, Myers," said Lancaster, rising.

The two men went into the house together. Joan heard the door close behind them. She was left to ponder over that interview.

She was conscious of two conflicting impulses: to leave, and to remain for Lancaster's sake. There was something about the man's pitiable condition that aroused all her sympathies. But there was something about the whole place repulsive in the extreme. She must get allies in this blind fight against the secretary if she remained. Whom? Mrs. Fraser? That was impossible as yet.

At that moment she saw Doctor Jenkins driving up the path, and went to meet him.

The boy sprang to the ground and raised his hat. "Good morning, Miss Wentworth. How is the doctor today?" he asked.

"Doctor Lancaster looks very ill," she answered. "And Doctor Jenkins, I want to ask you—"

"Pardon me, Miss Wentworth. Can I see him?"

"He is with Mr. Myers."

Jenkins' face assumed an aspect of profound discouragement. "Then I'll come back this afternoon," he said, preparing to enter the buggy again.

But he found Joan intercepting his passage. She had noted the look on his face, and she felt that he understood much which could be explained.

"Doctor Jenkins," she said quietly, "Doctor Lancaster is unwell and I am his nurse. Will you not tell me what is the matter with him?"

"Why, Miss Wentworth—" stammered the doctor.

So Doctor Lancaster himself is the sick man! And Joan says she'll help him. What ails the doctor?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

There are nine different grades of admirals in the British navy.

Accessories Are in Great Variety

Glittering Trinkets Are of Attractive Materials and Gay Colors.

Accessories appear to grow in importance and variety, as if one could not have enough of them. Wherever one sees the smartly dressed woman nowadays, writes a correspondent in the New York Times, one sees at her hand a vanity case, purse, bag, cigarette case or holder, and often a lipstick in its ornamental separate carrier. The materials of which these different trinkets are made are charming in color. Shell rimmed in silver is shown in a great assortment of small articles, from the toilet fittings for a traveling bag to the slenderest, most elegant cigarette holder. Jade or translucent composition in jade color is enchanting, either with silver mounting or set with brilliants. Amethyst, clear amber, coral and always onyx with crystal are among the attractive novelties.

In this season of garish and almost barbarous ornamentation in dress, the styles in jewels, trinkets, baubles of every sort are endless in variety. The choker necklace is the fad of the moment. The smartest necklaces are made of beads of enormous size, imitation pearls in different colors, gray, pink, blue and black. Many contrivances are invented, strands of pearls in graduated sizes being hung from the tight-around choker, worn in the front or at the back of the neck in absurd elaboration.

Bracelets grow in popularity, and any one of many styles is fashionable. One may wear several slender bangles, either the colored glass, the gold-flecked crystal, gold or platinum, or one bracelet. A pair in some quaint design like those worn in the '90s is considered very chic. Some of these have lovely cameo set on them, or oddly twisted gold, set with stones in old-fashioned patterns. Turquoise, garnets and seed pearls are oftentimes seen in these. The lovely old wide bracelet set with seed pearls is growing more and more rare, and is much

Sports Model Designed for Spring and Summer



This attractive sports model of green and white silk was one of the smart modes shown at the recent spring and summer revue of the Style Creators of America.

How to Eliminate First Source of Food Waste

A talk with the proprietor of one of the large groceries and markets in New England disclosed some facts concerning the cost of delivery that every housewife should know, observes Helen Harrington Downing, on "Saving at Home." This grocer is doing a business of \$1,000,000 and his annual expense for delivery is \$37,500, or practically 4 per cent of his gross volume. Only 50 per cent of the purchases made at this market are delivered, so the actual expense for delivery is nearly 8 per cent on the items that are delivered.

It is thus easy to see that if a store is so situated that the majority of customers want their purchases delivered, the expense to the grocer is anywhere from 6 to 8 per cent. By eliminating this expense, the dealer is first of all able to make a big saving in overhead cost of doing business. Seven per cent is more than most grocers net in a year. Five per cent is a very fair net profit. If a grocer's gross expense is 20 per cent it will thus be seen that from one-fourth to one-third of his total cost of doing business is delivery expense.

Therefore, when the housewife helps grocers to put over the no-delivery or the charge for delivery system, she is helping to reduce prices to the consumer from 3 to 8 per cent on the average purchases.

Also marketing in person means seeing all there is in the market and the widest opportunity for choice. Thus the housewife who goes herself to market, buys more economically and efficiently. And by taking her

Chic Tunic Creation—Brown Crepe de Chine



This tunic of brown crepe de chine, with braiding and chenille embroidery in a slightly darker shade, will appeal to many women.

prized by the women who go in for "period" costumes.

Gloves are drawing flattering attention to fashionable hands. The gauntlet style of glove is so generally worn that few street gloves of any other sort are seen. Invariably the cuff is a circular or plaited, narrow ruffle, pinked, perforated or embroidered. And it is modish now to wear the cuff turned down over the hand, for which reason it is lined to give an ornamental effect.

All of the new gloves are stitched in contrasting color, and in these the beiges, tans and browns are especially stylish. Black and white is smart, as always, gloves of each being stitched heavily with the other.

Fancy giving importance to the heel of a shoe! That is what is done in the present mode, heels of evening shoes being as thickly studded with jewels as are the bandeaux for the hair or the very ornate and costly purse bags that look like handbags of precious stones.

Lengthen Tots' Clothes to Give Extra Service

Devising a means whereby clothes may be made to give service until they are worn out is a problem in almost all families where there are small children. Panties will serve for two or three seasons if they are made extra high at the waistline for the first year's wear. In order that they may be of suitable length at this time a set of buttons should be sewed as high as possible on the panty waist. The next season the panties may be buttoned on a lower set. A hem of extra width never comes amiss when dresses and petticoats need lengthening. If the material is thin, a tuck easily may be run on the inside of the hem. Coats of lightweight material may be cut long enough to turn up and the hem concealed under the lining, whose extra length is turned inward.

Plaid Still in Vogue

The vogue of Scotch plaid is by no means over. Some remarkably handsome sports coats shown at the recent spring and summer revue of the Style Creators of America.

purchases home herself, she is saved the annoyance of having to wait for them, and is often able to put her perishable supplies on ice sooner, than if they were delivered. Thus she eliminates the first source of food waste in the home.

Long Coats Are Liked—Make Wearer Look Slim

A striking feature of the fashions of the winter is the general acceptance of the long coat, whether it forms part of an ensemble suit or is a separate coat intended to be worn over different dresses. So cleverly cut and fashioned are these new coats that they contrive to make everyone look delightfully slim, which may be one reason why they are so successful.

Soft suede finished woollens and velvets are chosen for their development and the colors are the rich tones of cranberry red, of autumn browns, of deep flattering greens and black.

The use of light furs in a nature tone is one of the distinctive notes, and while in many instances the line is straight there is also a tendency to exploit the flare at the hem.

Sleeves are exceptionally interesting, especially those with wide fur cuffs simulating a muff—melon or balloon sleeves they are called. Often there is a narrow band of the fabric brought through the center of the cuff to tie in a smart little bow.

Schoolgirl Wears Flannel

The smartest frocks for a school girl are made of flannel in small checks of blue, green and white. These have coats to match which are collared with appropriate furs.

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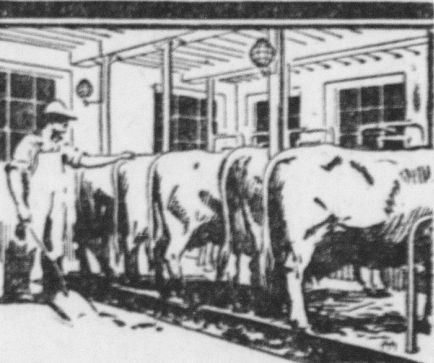
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