

MULBERRY SQUARE

LIDA LARRIMORE

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SYNOPSIS

To the quiet household of Doctor Ballard, in Mulberry Square, youthful Dr. Hugh Kennedy, son of an old friend of the physician, comes as an assistant to stay a year. He first meets Janie, unaffected and likable nineteen-year-old daughter of Doctor Ballard. Her older sister, Celia, a petted beauty, is away from home on a visit. Hugh regards Janie, a universal favorite, as a small girl, to be treated as a chum. Introduced to many of Janie's old friends, among them young Tom McAllister and Janie's Great-Uncle Charlie, Hugh is impressed by evidence of Doctor Ballard's kindness of heart, and his popularity.

CHAPTER III—Continued

"Well," she confessed, "sometimes I hate it, of course."
"Why do you like it tonight?"
Janie was quite unable to formulate an answer. She didn't know why. She knew only that she felt like golden bubbles inside. You couldn't explain why you were happy. That was like pulling off butterfly wings. You just felt it; a lump in your throat, a singing somewhere in your heart.
"I don't know." She wished she could take out her emotions and dress them in pretty words. Celia could. Janie couldn't. People thought, because of that, she didn't feel things at all. But Father knew.
"I don't know," she repeated.
"Of course you don't," he said gently. "It's a mixture of all sorts of things."

Janie's face brightened with her swift lighted look of pleasure. Miraculously, this red-haired young man seemed to understand. She looked up at him gratefully from under her shadowy lashes. He wasn't smiling his crinkly smile; his eyes were thoughtful and almost sad. Suddenly she wanted to know all about him; what kind of a little boy he had been, where he had lived and gone to school.
"Tell me about you," she said.
"It would make a dull story." He was smiling again. "There aren't any thrilling adventures."

"I don't care. Tell me anyway." She folded her hands in her lap.
He paused to light a cigarette and began, "Once upon a time there was a red-headed little boy . . ."
Janie, listening intently, traveled back with him to the brownstone house in New York. His mother, she learned, was dead. His sister and his brother were ten and twelve years older than he.

. . . So this little boy was pretty lonesome sometimes. He would go through a glass tunnel filled with plants—
"A conservatory?" Janie was becoming more and more impressed.
"This little boy named Hugh called it a glass tunnel with green things growing up through the floor. At the end of the tunnel was a door and behind the door was his father's office. Sometimes, if there weren't any ladies in white kid gloves having their nerves repaired, his father would tell him about a place called Mulberry Square where everybody was friendly and had a lovely time."
"That's strange, isn't it?" Janie marveled, "your knowing about us so long ago."
"The audience will please not interrupt."
"I won't again."
"Promise?"
"Cross my heart."
". . . And then . . ."
Tragedy stalked into the story. His brother had been killed in an automobile accident. He hurried over that part. His sister Louise had married. She was Mrs. Roderick Payson Van Horn. Janie thought that was a very elegant name.

. . . So this little boy, only he was larger now and his voice croaked like a bullfrog's, went away to school. He wore a uniform and learned to ride a horse and shoot at things . . .
Janie pictured him in a uniform. She wished she had known him then. But Father said he was twenty-six. Gracious! She'd have been only ten or eleven. He wouldn't have noticed her then.
". . . One day—" he paused and his eyes were sad. "Well, anyway, there wasn't anyone left in the brownstone house with the tunnel . . ."
His father had died! Janie, sympathizing, felt tears on her lashes.
". . . So Hugh went to college. When he was twenty-one, a man with a nut-cracker face told him that sometime he would have to go to Mulberry Square. But he didn't mind. His father had told him everybody had a lovely time."
"It's changed so," Janie mourned. "Since your father used to come for visits with Father."
"The audience will probably get warts," Hugh prophesied darkly. "She crossed her heart and broke a promise."
"I'm sorry."
"That doesn't hurt warts . . . Hugh," he continued, "who was, by this time rather a handsome young man, finished college and went to medical school. He worked pretty hard

and played sometimes and fell in and out of love . . ."
He spent vacations with his sister Janie learned. Newport, Bar Harbor, Murray Bay. You read about places like that in the picture sections of the Sunday papers . . . Heavens! How could he be expected to live in Mulberry Square!

. . . So he went into a hospital and wore a white uniform and grew a mustache and shaved it off because it turned out to be red. And then, one day, he came to Mulberry Square. That same evening, he sat on a bench and told a story to a little girl named Janie with hazel eyes and a pointed chin and a perfectly gorgeous smile. And that," he finished, "is all."
"But why?" Janie asked when she had thanked him for the story, "did your father want you to come?"
"I rather suspect," he answered, "that the Lorelei is to blame."
"What does she look like?" she asked.

"She's white all over with graceful lines and trimmings of solid brass."
What a strange description! Janie looked up to see if he was teasing. His face, she observed, was grave but twinkles frisked in his eyes.
"And," he added, amused at her bewildered expression, "she wears a striped sunbonnet over her forehead."
"Oh!" Janie at once was immensely relieved. "It's a boat!"
"The Lorelei," he insisted. "She lures young doctors away from their stethoscopes and makes them idle and useless."

Janie understood.
"You won't have a chance to be worthless here," she gravely assured him. "We row when we go on the river. There isn't a single Lorelei in all of Mulberry Square."

III

The town clock struck eleven. They walked slowly through the Square and across to the opposite side. Everything was quiet now. A messenger boy was clicking the rectory gate.
"Hello, Johnny Quillen."
"Hi, Janie."
"There are a great many 'Johns' around here," Hugh remarked.
"That's because it's Father's name."
"Are they all named for him?"
"Everybody loves Father." Janie was bursting with pride. It showed in her eyes and in the tilt of her chin. "He's always doing things for people. There's Stoney, for instance. Father found him one night down in Shantytown all cut to pieces after a fight. He patched him up and brought him home. I think Stoney would die for Father."
"He's splendid."
"You'll see," Janie said softly, "when you've been here a little while."
The Ballards' wall began at the end of the rectory fence. They passed the gate which led to the side veranda and walked on to the entrance.

The office door opened. A young woman with a child in her arms walked down the shallow steps. Doctor Ballard, tall, white haired, a little stooped, stood in the open doorway.
"Do as I told you, Martha. Use the lotion three times a day."
"I'll try." A weary young voice.
"But you know how it is with us. Sam hasn't worked for—"
"Get it at Smith's and have it charged to me."
"Oh, thank you, Doctor!"
The door closed. The woman, lifting her shoulders, opened the gate.
"Good evening, Martha."
"Hello, Janie."
"A rash. He's covered all over . . . Janie Ballard, your father is the kindest man who ever lived."
"See?" Janie glanced up at Hugh. He squeezed her hand.
"Yes, Janie," he said. "I see."

IV

Janie said her prayers that night. She knelt in the dark beside her narrow white bed. The petition followed a familiar formula. There was only one deviation. "Make Aunt Rose better," she said half aloud. "But, please, God, not too soon."

CHAPTER IV

The Square did not accept Hugh all at once. It was inclined to regard with suspicion this unfamiliar young doctor. He had a way of losing his temper and speaking unpleasant truths. There was the case of old Mrs. Pope.

"She says I'm not to come back again," Hugh announced one afternoon.
"Who?" Doctor Ballard looked up from a medical journal.
"That old harridan, Mrs. Pope." Hugh's face wore an expression of indignation and injured pride which caused Doctor Ballard to smile.
"What did you say, Hugh?"
"I told her there was nothing the matter with her heart and it wouldn't kill her to walk downstairs."
"Serves her right." Doctor Ballard laughed. "But," he added more gravely, "as much as they need it, you can't

go around lighting firecrackers under people. You're new to them and young and—"

"Cancelled?" Hugh was smiling, too. "Intolerant, was the word I meant. Win their confidence, my boy. Then you can insult them as much as you like."

Hugh attempted to follow the Doctor's advice. He seemed, in those first bewildering weeks, to make no progress at all. Janie noted the passing events with anxious and critical eyes. No mother bird watching her fledgling's first attempt to use his wings could have been more concerned.

"I think I know what the matter," she said as they sat on the side porch one evening after office hours which had been particularly trying. "You're too—"
She searched for the appropriate word. "You're too formal, Hugh."
"Formal?"

"I mean you're not friendly enough. Really, Hugh," she said gravely. "I think you'll probably be a grand doctor in about ten years. Now let's go see if there was any cake left from supper. Being an inspiration always makes me hungry."

Hugh made an honest effort to be friendly. He had no trouble with the uptown patients. Manor street and the sacred Heights were willing to give him a chance. Doctor Ballard's practice, however, was largely confined to the mill district surrounding the Square and the criss-crossed alleys of Shantytown beyond the rail-



"Probably You'll Be a Grand Doctor in About Ten Years."

road tracks. There Hugh felt himself to be openly resented and secretly ridiculed. Janie suggested a reason and a remedy.

"It's this car," she said as they were riding home from the playground one afternoon.
"What's the matter with it?" Hugh was tired and warm and exasperated. At that particular moment, he hated Mulberry Square and the mill district and the hop-scotch alleys of Shantytown.

"It's too gorgeous. Don't you see, Hugh?" Janie's small flushed face, smudged with dust, was very grave. "If you ride in a car like this, they think you couldn't possibly understand their troubles. Most of the time it's a friend they want and not a doctor at all."
"Shall I rig myself up like St. Francis and walk through Shantytown with pigeons perched on my shoulders?"
"Silly! Of course not. But you needn't be quite so—so magnificent. See?"

"I'm d—d if I do." Hugh brought the car to a standstill with a vicious snorting of brakes.
"You have a terrible temper." Janie dismounted from the long maroon-colored roadster with her chin in the air. "I don't see how we stand you!"
She didn't expect him to take her advice. She was surprised when he came for her the following afternoon in a second-hand roadster very much the worse for wear.

"Is this bad enough?" he asked with a sheepish grin.
"It looks sort of friendly, I think."
"Hop in." Hugh flung open the door. "We'll see how fast she can travel."
They named the car "Horatius."
"But why 'Horatius'?" Doctor Ballard asked when he was invited out in front of the house for an after-supper inspection.

"Well, you see, Father," Janie made haste to explain, "it stilled on the White Marsh bridge and Hugh couldn't start it and the cars coming the other way couldn't pass. So we decided we'd name it 'Horatius.'"
Doctor Ballard laughed. Mother looked puzzled.
"I don't see the connection," she said.
"Mother isn't acquainted with Mr. Macaulay." Doctor Ballard smiled at Janie and Hugh as though they shared an amusing secret. "They didn't read

such gory literature as 'The Lays of Ancient Rome' in Miss Parker's conservatory for female rosebuds."

Janie quoted rather freely:
Then up spake brave Horatius
A valiant man was he,
Now, who will stand on either hand
And guard the bridge with me?

Whether or not the humble appearance of Horatius had anything to do with the gradual change from resentment to acceptance, Hugh was never able to decide. The Miller twin, however, certainly did. Hugh rushed into the Miller kitchen one afternoon to find the child purple and pop-eyed, apparently choking to death. Without waiting to ask questions, Hugh seized the little fellow, up-ended him and shook him vigorously. A piece of hard candy rolled down to the floor. Two minutes later the child, turned right side up, was sobbing quietly in his mother's arms.

This exhibition of medical skill could not have occurred in a more auspicious place. Mrs. Miller, the elder, was a tireless bearer of news. Before night all the Square, and a considerable portion of the surrounding territory, had been informed that "the young doctor" had saved the Miller twin's life. Hugh was the hero of the day.

Janie favored him with a glimpse of her wide gay smile. "It will make a difference. You wait and see."
It did make a difference. Hugh recognized the change in the atmosphere. It pleased him to a surprising degree. He wondered very often why he cared whether they liked him or not. He would be here only for a year. This was merely an interlude. It had nothing to do with his future failure or success.

But he did care. Pride, he supposed, and his admiration for Doctor Ballard. Then, too, there was Janie.

"I'm living up to you," he said one evening when she told him that Father was proud of the way he was getting on.

"Me?" Her eyes opened wide.
"You stick pretty close to that playground." His voice was teasing and tender, too. "It isn't a picnic in weather like this."

"Sometimes I hate it," Janie confessed. "But I'd be ashamed to quit."
"That's what I like about you, Janie." Hugh lazily averted the hammock. "You're the most downright and honest young person I know."

Honest! Janie was stricken with remorse. She thought of Celia's photograph waiting to be called for at the gift-shop uptown. Honest! She blessed the concealing shadows and made a stern resolve.

The next afternoon she left the playground early. When she reached home she went directly into the living room. Presently, Celia's photograph, the glass restored and the silver shining, stood on the shelf of the old-fashioned square piano. Beneath it Janie arranged lilies-of-the-valley in a low crystal bowl. She was grasping the nettle in her own whole-hearted fashion.

After supper, she led Hugh into the living room. He was provokingly slow about noticing the photograph. He wandered aimlessly around the room until Janie wanted to scream. At last, in desperation, she seated herself on the piano bench and struck a few wrong notes.

"Is this the tune," she asked, knowing very well that it wasn't, "of the song you were playing last night?"

"Lord no! Do you call that a tune?"
He was walking toward the piano. Janie felt an impulse to dash Celia to the floor. She didn't, of course. She moved over on the bench to make room for Hugh.

"Here you go." His fingers were picking out the gay little sparkling tune . . .
"Five feet tall
Rather small
That's my baby."

His eyes lifted from the keys.
"Who's that?" His fingers continued, not very skillfully, to pick out the gay little tune.

"Celia."
"Oh . . ."
"Isn't she pretty?" Janie was grasping the nettle again.
"Gorgeous . . ." He struck a discord, frowned, found the right notes and, smiling down at Janie with a teasing twinkle in his rosy brown eyes, he began all over again . . .

"Five feet tall
Rather small
That's my baby."

II

"Janie, dear."
"Yes, Mother." Janie, lying on the grass under the catalpa tree, looked up from a magazine.
"If I were you—" Mother paused. Janie knew that she was searching for tactful words. "If I were you," she presently continued, "I wouldn't tag after Hugh."

"What do you mean?" Janie looked straight up into Mother's eyes.
"Well, dear—" The direct gaze of Janie's eyes had also, at times, proved an embarrassment to Mother. "He may not want—"

"Did he tell you that?" Janie felt a hot flush creeping into her cheeks.

"Of course not." Mother closed the lid of her sewing basket and gathered up scraps of lilac tulle. "But he may feel that he has to be polite. I just wouldn't do it," she finished as though that settled the matter.

But it didn't settle the matter. For a long time after Mother had gone into the house Janie lay on the grass, her arms folded under her head, her eyes gazing up through the catalpa leaves into the blue of the summer sky. Did Hugh think she had been tagging? she wondered miserably. He hadn't seemed to mind. She thought he rather enjoyed the things they had done together. Not as much as she had, of course. That wasn't to be expected. But at least, he had seemed amused. Was he only being polite?

She recalled the Saturday night dances at the club. She hadn't "tagged" then. She had introduced him to Kay Leland and Dolly Bruce and all the Manor street girls. She had urged him to dance with them . . .

He hadn't seemed to think she was "tagging" when they went out to have tea at "Sportsman's Hall" with Aunt Lucy and Muriel and Muriel's Washington guests. It was he who had suggested that they slip away up into the woods behind the gardens and the stables. "So much elegant conversation makes my head ache."
"They're your kind of girls."
"My kind?"

"They've all been abroad and had coming out parties and—"
"It hasn't done them much good . . . What is it smells so grand?"
"Sassafras. You dig up the roots and—"
"Come on, Brownie, let's dig."

There were other things to remember; having supper with Uncle Charlie under the tree in his weedy side yard, suppers that were fun because of Jeff's soft crabs and Uncle Charlie's remarks; sitting sometimes in the evening beside the fountain in the Square with the hurdy-gurdy playing and the locust blossoms smelling so sweet it made you want to cry; taking half a dozen youngsters to the circus, buying them pop corn and ice cream cones and lovely scarlet balloons . . .

But maybe Mother knew. Perhaps he was only being polite. "Tagging," Janie felt hot with shame from her head to the tips of her toes. She flopped over on the grass and buried her face in her arms.

After that she avoided him.
"Let's go to the movies tonight."
"No thank you, Hugh." Very primly. "I have another engagement."
Or—
"I'm driving out to the Hollis farm. Want to go, young fellow?"
"I'm busy." Swallowing hard to banish a lump in her throat. "I'm going upstairs to write."

But she didn't write. She sat on the sill of the dormer window with the locust branches brushing against the screen, lonely and miserable, growing up inside . . . It was silly to care about things. But you couldn't help it if that was the way you were made . . .
Hugh wondered what had happened.

"See here, small person," he said finding her picking mint leaves in the garden one afternoon. "I want to talk to you."

"I'd better go dress for supper." Janie clutched at a straw.

"No you don't!" He barred with his outstretched arms the only path to escape. "You've been dodging me for a week. I've got you now." He lifted her to the top of the wall. "You can't get away. Tell me, Janie." He wasn't smiling. His eyes looked worried and, somehow, hurt. "What stupid thing have I done?"

"Nothing."
"I've missed you, little fellow."
"I've been right here." A lump in her throat. Tears on her lashes. A desperate resolve not to let them spill down on her cheeks. "You've seen me every day."
"Not you," he said gently. "Just a linen frock and a pair of sunburned legs . . . Please tell me. If I've done anything, I'm sorry."

"I thought." She made an effort to be casual. "I was afraid you'd think I was—" She paused, swallowed hard, spoke the humiliating word. "I was afraid you would think I was tagging."
"Tagging?"

He hadn't thought so at all. She could tell by his look of surprise. A weight lifted from her heart. She felt like a fluff of thistle-down all ready to blow away. It was easy, now, to explain.

"Well, living right here with us—" The words were tumbling all over each other. "You might have thought you had to take me places and do everything I suggested whether you wanted to or not and," she finished abruptly, "I didn't want to be a pest."
"A pest!" He disposed of the unpleasant word. "Why Janie, I've enjoyed everything. Where did you get that idea?"

"I just thought it up." She couldn't tell him that it had been Mother's idea? Anyway, what did it matter?
(TO BE CONTINUED)

English Woman's Code

Carried to Extremes

For the most part the English woman regards the use of cosmetics, the proper care of the hair, the proper wearing of clothes, as turning a woman into a professional in the most deplorable sense of the word, says Harper's Magazine. She runs her house and herself on the assumption that she must be an un-sullied amateur first, last and all the time.

In consequence one often feels that, whereas in France even the plainest women never give up, in England even the most potentially beautiful are like as not never to begin.

Now it is quite possible that American women are too professional in their pursuit of the art of being and looking charming and that this accounts for the 12-in-a-box feeling one sometimes has on the sidewalks of Fifth avenue. It is certain that a lady hiker in rough tweed breeches, silk hose, thick walking shoes and lipstick has an amphibious air as she takes the train for an outing up the Hudson.

It is also certain that the English woman know better how to dress for certain practical purposes such as getting wet in the rain. But it is a thousand pities that her cult of misguided amateurism prevents her from taking the little trouble that would make her natural charms irresistible.

But If—

An old father, who had a weakness for gambling, called his children round his bedside.

"You must all promise me," he said, "never to touch a card. Above all, I would warn you against playing baccarat. It is a game which will cost you a fortune, waste your time and ruin your health. Do you all promise me never to play baccarat?"
"Yes, father!" in chorus.
"And remember—if you do play, always take the bank!"



Complexion Curse

She thought she was just unlucky when he called on her once—avoided her thereafter. But so one assumes pimple, blemished skin. More and more women are realizing that pimples and blotches are often danger signals of clogged bowels—poisonous wastes ravaging the system. Let NATURE'S REMEDY afford complete, thorough elimination and promptly cast away beauty-ruining poisonous matter. Fine for sick headache, bilious conditions, dizziness. Try this safe, dependable, all-vegetable corrective. At all drug-gists—only 25c.

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