

Bright Star

By
Mary Schumann

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WNU Service

SYNOPSIS

Kezia Marsh, pretty, selfish and twenty, arrives home in Coriath from school and is met by her older brother, Hugh. He drives her to the Marsh home where her widowed mother, Fluvanna, a warm-hearted, self-sacrificing and understanding soul, welcomes her. Kezia's sister, Margery, plump and matronly with the care of three children, is at lunch with them.

CHAPTER I—Continued

Margery's dainty figure had grown plump, but there were contented lines about her eyes and mouth. She wasn't sorry for herself tied down with three children under six. She didn't mind her vanishing prettiness. This was the life she had dreamed of ever since she had been a little girl and played with her family of dolls—a home, an adoring husband, and children to tend and scrub and dress attractively.

"Margery—precious!" Kezia came through the screen door, and ran toward her sister.

Mrs. Marsh surveyed them all from the head of the table, her gentle shining eyes resting on them one by one. "Do you realize this is the first time we have sat down together for years?"

She had never said anything like that before. With utmost tact she had made Dorrie and Will Platt, Margery's husband, welcome, but Hugh felt that it added to her pleasure today to have just them. It bridged the interlude since they had left her roof and become absorbently interested in other pursuits, other persons.

Margery forgot her role of dignified young matron, Hugh, his position as assistant to the president of the Brower Steel Works, Kezia, the sophisticated teachings of Lolly Masters, an older girl at school, and her desire to model herself on the lines of that seductive and fascinating person.

"What are the headlines about the Cornithians, Marge? The births, the weddings, the deaths, the scandals—particularly the scandals! . . . I love knowing the dirt about people! It makes you feel you're not so bad yourself!" cried Kezia over the coffee.

"You would," said Hugh. He tweaked her ear as he rose. One o'clock. He must get back to the office. "Put them on the spot—use machine guns!"

Fluvanna followed Hugh to the door. "Give my love to Dorrie! She's a thoughtful child—she brought me a new book yesterday, a novel on China. Dear of her."

"She did?" Hugh's face brightened as it always did when Dorrie was praised. Dorrie hadn't mentioned the gift, but she had a queer respect and affection for his mother, a revealing admission.

He spent the afternoon going over the cost sheets, and had a talk with Sloan, the president, over the price cutting of the Arrow Steel, which kept him until after five.

He took his car from the parking shed under the bridge and slowly wove his way through the impatient late-afternoon traffic.

He ran into a gas station to fill up his tank. A boyhood friend, Doc Hiller, waved to him as he passed. He waved back. He had a shamed feeling of ingratitude at the sight of Doc. They should go to see the Hillers, have them for dinner. They had called, made so many friendly advances—and Doc was such a darn good fellow! But Dorrie had a cool way of ignoring debts she did not intend to pay.

"Yes," she would reply listlessly to his suggestion, "sometime we must have them. Don't feel up to it now. Perhaps next week."

He lived on a street which had been part of the fairway of a golf course before the town had spread westward. The small Colonial and English style houses were attractive and well-kept, each with its hedge and evergreen shrubbery and driveway leading back to the garage. His own house was of tapestry brick with casement windows, green flower-boxes on the square porch at the side, green and henna awnings. He left the car in the drive. Perhaps Dorrie would want to go out after dinner.

A bridge table in the living-room, with cards and scores littered on it, testified to recent activity. Then he saw Dorrie in a small sunny room just beyond, sitting relaxed, quiescent, her hands folded in her lap. The sun touched her burnished hair, accented the creamy pallor of her skin, her red mouth, the delicately moulded nose.

Hugh stood still a moment while emotion burned through him. It came on him with a surprise, almost a choke. This lovely woman was his—his. He left her in the house each morning . . . she was

his to return to at night. The pith of his heart . . .

"Dorrie."

She started a little as if recalled from distant visions, then rose and came toward him. Her sea-green eyes had an excited luminosity in their depths as if her thoughts had been pleasant ones.

"Hello, Hugh."

"Didn't you hear me come in?"

She smiled slowly up at him as his arms went around her. "No, didn't hear you."

"What were you thinking about?"

She shook her head. "Don't know . . . day-dreaming, I guess."

He kissed her. Her hand curled in his; a flush rose on her delicate cheek.

"Have a good game?"

"So-so. Joan and Orinda—Lesley Gates for a fourth." She moved toward the table and put the decks of cards in their pasteboard covers. "Lesley is a poor loser."

Fluvanna awakened from a dream of Jim Marsh, her husband. She had the illusion he was bending over, trying to tell her something, and all the sick, unruly associations that his memory brought unfurled themselves and waved exciting banners. Presently, lying with her eyes wide open and seeing the reassuring light of day, the sensation ebbed.

Kezia was home—was right across the hall, sleeping in the green and gold bedroom. Kezia was probably the reason she had dreamed of Jim. The child didn't look like him . . . no, Hugh remembered his father in stature and feature, but Kezia's whole personality carried a haunting reminder. The expressions she had, the tricky way she raised her eyes and made them aspiring and wistful, her cajoling manner which concealed her purposes, the will to have her own way, all hinted at the feminine counterpart of Jim.

She rose and drew up the shades. The perfume of lilacs came up from a bush beneath the window and brought back the spring of long ago—lilacs, the murmur of growth, and two people under an umbrella . . . Just a week after she met him.

That had been a momentous night, a kind of prescience about it from the second the Clements had presented him. Fate did that sometimes. Usually it worked soundlessly, but once in a great while it spoke a single word to you—"Now."

Ella Clement had said: "This is our cousin, James Marsh, from Philadelphia. He is opening an insurance agency here . . ." and Ella had gone on chattering in her tangential way about the Marshes living near some park, and her visit to them once when she had met some Senator—what was his name?—and the really very nice people who lived in Philadelphia.

Later when they were alone for a moment, Jim had smiled with his enigmatic eyes—strange the pull of some eyes—and said: "They've told me about you. I've been wondering how you got your name, Fluvanna. I never heard it before, but it has a nice sound, like deep water flowing under a bridge."

She had gone home that night with a disturbance in her heart—such as she had never known before, and said to herself: "If he asks me, I shall marry him." . . . Yes, it had been like that.

She found a note under the knocker on Kezia's door. "Wake me at eight. I'm playing tennis." It was five minutes to eight now. She rattled the knocker and heard a sleepy response from Kezia.

In the kitchen, Anna, a chunky girl of Roumanian parentage, turned from the stove with a liquid shine of welcome in her long dark eyes. "G'morning, Mis' Marsh."

"Good-morning, Anna. Breakfast almost ready?"

"Ready in ten minutes or so. I haven't squeezed the oranges. Miss Kezia be down?"

"Yes, she's getting up. She is going to play tennis with some friends. I'll go out to cut some flowers for the table."

She went out to the garden.

Eric Olsen, a young man who took care of the yard and the car, was cutting the tender lush grass. The mingled fragrance of the lilacs, the shorn grass, the wild crab, sent a tingling response through her being. She gathered a bouquet of dark blue iris, then clipped an armful of fragile nodding columbine. She wiped the garden mould from her feet before the side door.

"Hello, Cousin Fluvanna," called a youthful voice from inside. "I just walked in—been wandering about." She held the screen open for Fluvanna.

"Ellen! . . . Been painting?"

"I had to—this morning! Lovely flowers—let me take them."

Fluvanna thought: "If you could paint yourself among those flowers, Ellen!" Aloud she said: "Just in time for breakfast—you must stay. Kezia will be down in a minute. I'll call her—tell her you're here."

Ellen put out a detaining hand. "Not yet—not just yet. I have something to tell you."

Fluvanna smiled. "Nice?"

"Very nice . . . I'm engaged."

"No!"

"Yes, I am," returned Ellen ecstatically. "It happened last night!"

"To Jerry!"

"Dear—dear!" murmured Fluvanna. "You told me quite a bit about him, brought him here . . . still I didn't think so soon . . ."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

STAR DUST

Movie • Radio

By VIRGINIA VALE

RANDOLPH SCOTT'S marriage came as a surprise to Hollywood; rumor has had the handsome Randy about to propose to one motion picture star after another. So imagine the shock when he announced that he was married last March, when he went back home.

His bride is a member of the wealthy and social DuPont family—couple that with the fact that before he went into pictures he was an usher at a DuPont wedding, and you may get some idea of how far the romance dates back.

In fact, there used to be rumors to the effect that he was very much in love with a girl in the Sunny South but felt that he hadn't enough money to marry her—though his father was a rich man. So—fame and fortune came by way of the movies, and now Hollywood, where bachelors are far too rare, has lost one of the most eligible ones.

"The Road to Glory" is going to be one of Fredric March's favorite pictures; he liked the role the best of any he'd had in a long time, and gave a magnificent performance when the cameras turned. Judging from its early reception, the picture is going to be a favorite with film fans, too. The versatile March knows a "fat" part when he sees it. He demonstrated that in his portrayal of Bothwell in "Mary Queen of Scotland" in which Katharine Hepburn starred as the ill-fated monarch.

Olivia de Havilland's very beautiful younger sister, Jean Fontaine, has been signed up for pictures by Jesse Lasky, the old star-maker (at the moment of this writing it's still a secret). So remember the name and look for the face, for it's dollars to doughnuts that she will be one of the big names in pictures before very long.

Of course you've heard Peter Van Steeden's band on the radio—now he declares that some day you may hear his daughter play. She is only a year and a half old, but she likes her toy piano better than anything else, and he swears that she can play several notes of "The Merry Widow Waltz" on it.

Edgar Guest is known far and wide as a poet; in fact, the name of "Eddie Guest" is a household word. But—he wishes that you knew him as a musician. In the broadcasting studios he gazes wistfully at the flying fingers of the pianist and banjo players who are on his program; he said recently to a friend "If I could only get out of my typewriter what those fellows get out of their instruments"—not realizing that the poems he writes are music to the ears of multitudes.

Robert Taylor is getting more fan mail than anyone else on the Metro lot—including Clark Gable. And that's what makes for long-term contracts, big salaries, and especially selected roles. Also, he is still devoted to Barbara Stanwyck.

Charles Boyer and his wife, Pat Patterson, paused a day in New York on their way to Europe; it was one of the hottest days of a very hot summer, but he wore a topcoat when they arrived, and she wore one too. They must have believed what Californians say about New York weather. He very diplomatically said nothing about the making of "The Garden of Allah," his latest picture.

Fred Astaire made all arrangements for his new broadcasting series before he hopped off for Europe for a vacation, most of which will be spent with his sister and former dancing partner, Lady Cavendish. He'll begin broadcasting September 8, and Jack Benny will give him a send-off, just for luck. Movie fans are wondering what the next film vehicle of the dancing king and his partner Ginger Rogers will be.

ODDS AND ENDS . . . They do say that one reason why Adolphe Menjou was so glad to sail off to Europe was that his caricature of John Barrymore in "Sing, Baby, Sing" is pretty harsh . . . Patricia Ellis has been entertaining three charming young people, Jon, Eugene and Marjorie O'Brien—her sister and brothers . . . Jean Harlow loves the sun, but she stayed out in it much too long the other day, and got a serious case of sunburn that kept her in bed for a couple of days . . . William Powell and Myrna Loy are going to do "The Return of the Thin Man"—for which loud cheers!

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Animals, Insects Carry On at Their Own Trades

Nearly all animals carry on a regular business and in their variety represent various trades among men, says an article in a newspaper more than seventy-four years old, and reprinted by the New York Sun.

There are no better geometri-

cians among men than bees. Their cells are so constructed that with the least quantity of material they have the largest sized spaces and the least possible interstices. The mole is the meteorologist. The bird called the ninekiller is an arithmetician; also the crow, the wild turkey, and other birds. The torpedo, the day, and the electric eel are electricians. The nautilus is a navigator. He raises and lowers his sails, casts and weighs anchor and performs nautical feats. Whole tribes of birds are musicians.

The beaver is an architect, builder and wood-cutter. He cuts down trees and erects houses and dams. The marmot is a civil engineer. He not only builds houses, but constructs aqueducts and drains to keep them dry.

The ant maintains a regular standing army. Wasps are paper manufacturers. Caterpillars are silk-spinners. The squirrel is a ferryman. With a chip or a piece of bark for a boat, and his tail for a sail, he crosses a stream. Dogs, wolves, jackals, and many others, are hunters.

The black bear and heron are fishermen. The ants are day laborers. The monkey is a dandy and rope-dancer. There are also sloths and burglars and "black-legs" among animals, but they are not quite so bad as those found among men.

Third-Eye Reptile

A creature allied to the lizard is the tuatara of New Zealand; this has been called "the living fossil," for it is the sole living representative of the ancient reptiles which roamed over this world millions of years ago. It retains traces of the third eye which was a feature of some of the terrible monsters of the past. The tuatara is supposed to be the parent of all lizards.

Third Amendment Not Used

No case in American history has arisen under that clause of the third amendment to the Constitution which reads, "No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent," etc. But when drawn it was important as a remembrance of British occupancy of private homes.

Magnet Has the Power of Repulsion and Attraction

The most peculiar property of iron seems to be its power of magnetism, says Ireland's Own. The natural magnet is a ponderous iron stone of a blackish color. It is supposed to derive its magnetic power from the position in which it lay in the earth, for a bar of iron if suspended in a particular direction for some time becomes magnetic.

If one of these natural magnets be broken into pieces each piece will have the property of attracting iron and communicating to it magnetic power by friction—thus if a needle be rubbed from its eye to its point a few times over the North pole of a magnet and then stuck in a small cork to swim on water, the eye will veer towards the north and the point towards the south. In this way the Chinese in early days formed their mariners compass, a guide on which they could rely at all times with perfect safety.

The magnet has a power of repulsion as well as of attraction. Each natural magnet has an attracting and a repelling pole, and the space between the poles will neither attract nor repel. In one of the palaces of Portugal was one of these natural magnets, of so large a size that it was capable of sustaining a weight of two hundred pounds; it was a present from the Emperor of China to a resident of Portugal.

Galapagos Tortoise Can Count Age by Centuries

The early Spanish explorers named the Galapagos islands after the huge tortoises they found on the beaches. The islands lie some 700 miles west of Ecuador in the Pacific and were ports of call, first for pirate craft, then men of war and New England whalers, observes a writer in the Washington Star.

The tortoises were tame, abundant and easily captured. They lived for weeks below decks without feeding, and were a cheap source of fresh meat. Early historians said that as many as 100,000 of them were removed from the islands in a single year.

The old papers of whalers out of Salem recorded that the officers fed on the livers of the tortoises and the sailors got the stew. There were at least a dozen varieties on the islands.

In the early days tortoises five feet long and weighing up to 400 pounds were common.

The numbers of the tortoises also have been reduced by wild dogs and pigs, which feed on the eggs. Thus only a few of the giants survive while smaller members of their family thrive in many quarters of the world.

Sign of Respect

In Masal Land, East Africa, spitting is a token of respect. Before advancing to shake hands he will expectorate freely into his palm. He spits before any important event, or at the coming of a friend or superior.

Waikiki Once Tabu

Waikiki Beach, famous American resort, was once forbidden to the common people, as Island kings had summer homes there.

have . . .



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IN five

HAS DEFECTIVE EYES

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MOST school children now entering the first grade have good eyesight. But, according to past averages, one in every five of them will finish the eighth grade with defective vision!

Unfortunately, many boys and girls are obliged to do their home study work under light so dim that even large print becomes difficult to read. Dark shadows, unshaded bulbs—these, too, can cause severe eyestrain.

The I-E-S reading and study lamp will assure your child abundant light, do away with stinging glare, and harmful shadows—make study more of a pleasure. Get one for that study table at once. It won't cost much.

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