

BRIGHT STAR

By Mary Schumann

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CHAPTER VII—Continued

The afternoon over, she was dizzy with remorse and told herself she was a weak, voluptuous woman—like her mother. She wouldn't see him again.

But she did. It became imperative for her to see him. Frightened, she sent for him to exact his promise to be discreet. It was very easy to allow Cun to take her in his arms while he vowed his discretion.

Sometimes she had moods of self-loathing when she met some new evidence of Hugh's affection, or of his mother's confidence in her. Finally these ceased altogether. There were no more struggles to attain the shore; she was swept along by a deep and dangerous current. The stolen love stimulated her whole being, and life was only a frantic waiting until the next meeting could be arranged with some degree of safety.

Her feeling for Hugh progressed through several phases, apology and pity at first, then resentment that he should possess her personality, and finally hatred, where she magnified trifles, seized on each variance of opinion and attitude to bolster up her own position. She had come to the point where she felt it would be a kind of pleasure to have Hugh know. She had often wanted to tell him—watch his smug assurance that he could fill her life, fall away!

The Sunday morning after her declaration to him, she awoke late. The chromium-framed little clock pointed to ten. She looked over sleepily. The bed beside her had not been occupied. Then she remembered and sat up abruptly. Last night?

Joan and Hugh had been in the kitchen. It hadn't seemed long at the time, but perhaps it was a half hour. She and Cun sitting on the love seat at the far end of the dimly lighted room, drugged by caresses, whispering, had been rather oblivious. They were confident that at the sound of returning voices or footsteps they could rise and casually survey a book, a picture. Then Hugh's car had started and he had driven past the windows on the drive.

Cun got up and went out to the kitchen. He came back with his forehead knitted. "Hugh was sick, Joan says. He must have gone home. . . . Funny, wasn't it? I wonder . . ."

"What?"

"Could he have looked in the window? No . . . the blinds are down."

"Where is Joan?"

"Out there, sitting in a chair."

"Do you think—?" She felt guilty and uncomfortable.

Then Joan had come in. Hugh had suddenly complained of feeling sick, had gone out the back door. Cun could drive Dorrie over if she felt she must go.

On the way home, Cun, who had recovered his spirits, reassured her. Hugh was too stupid to suspect anything. Honestly, it made him laugh the way she led that fellow around! . . . And probably he hadn't gone home—just to a drug store for some medicine. Why worry? Nothing to worry about. At the worst, she could fix up a story, make him swallow it. He had been with Joan a half a dozen times when she had been uneasy, questioned him. A smart girl, Joan—but gullible.

He'd call her on Monday at the same time. Hugh there—or other company—say "wrong number" and he'd try later.

She rose and putting on slippers and a negligee, ascertained that he was not in the house. His car was gone from the garage.

Her fingers trembled as she dialed Cun's number. She hoped Joan would not answer. In a few seconds she heard Cun's cheerful voice, "Hello."

"Cun, I must see you at once."

He hesitated, then said, "I don't hear you very well."

"Come over. I must see you."

He hesitated again before he replied, "I'm not in the market for a bargain in a car. I expect to run my bus until next spring at least . . . I might drop around and look it over, however . . . This year's model and only gone two thousand miles? . . . I'll see you a little later."

He came in less than half an hour. He was freshly shaved, looked carefree, florid and anticipatory. He smiled as he entered the door. "Not here?"

"No, no one is."

He flung his hat on the hall seat and with his arm around her drew her into the living-room.

She faced him determinedly. "Cun, Hugh knows. He saw us last night."

"The deuce he did!"

"He was packing his bags when I got home. I got him to stay the night, but he was gone before I awakened this morning."

Cun whistled.

"Did he take his things?"

"No, they're still here."

He relaxed from his tense attitude, shrugged his shoulders. "I suppose he was furious, looking in on our little party! But he doesn't

really know anything . . . You can handle him all right. But it means we'll have to be more careful in the future."

Dorrie felt a nervous doubt of Cun assail her. "But he does know. I told him."

He stared at her unbelieving. "My God, Dorrie, you told him?"

She answered a little sullenly. "I lost my head. I suppose I was tired of all this pretending."

"What was the need of it? This is awkward. Do you realize what the consequences may be? . . . Hugh's not a bad fellow. I might like him if he weren't married to you! And there's Joan—and the town—and my company." He seemed positively edgy and there was a queer, critical curve to his lip.

She turned away. "You don't love me!"

He drew her back to him, his eyes still troubled. "I'm out of my head about you, you know it, you dear golden-haired Circe! But just the same—"

"Just the same—what?" Dorrie insisted tauntly.

"You've got us into a sweet mess when it wasn't necessary. I'm awfully fond of Joan, as I've often told you; I've outgrown her—kid marriage. But there are complications. Alimony—you know Joan hasn't a cent. And I'm not making a princely salary."

"Perhaps she won't ask any," said Dorrie hopefully.

"Can't count on that."

Dorrie looked about her. "I'm awfully fond of my home. He let me get just what I wanted. He couldn't take it, could he?" Her voice quavered.

"Afraid he could. Although I imagine Hugh would be awfully decent."

She buried her head on his shoulder. "I don't care about anything—only you," she whispered. "I want to be with you."

His arm tightened about her. Then she felt an unease in his muscles. "This is darn danger-

ous—my being here," he whispered as he kissed her and released her. "But you're a dangerous woman."

"Going?" she faltered. "But we haven't settled anything. You haven't told me what to do."

He paused on his way to the door. "I'll have to think about it. And by the way, better not call me at the office again. I'll find a way to call you." He picked up his hat.

She felt she could not let him go. She, who was so chary of caresses, felt an irresistible longing to have his arms about her. Her lips trembled with appeal. "You won't let me down, Cun? . . . I've grown to love you so terribly. I thought you'd be glad we were free of all this hiding. You've said so often you'd give anything if I could be your wife."

He answered with vehement ardor, "Darling, I'd lay down my life for you!"

She gave a gasp of relief. She loved every motion of his quick agile body, loved his gaiety, his carelessness, his fire that kindled in her an ungovernable passion. She would give up her home, her matching rugs and draperies, her Duncan Phyfe furniture, her silver—everything—if only she could have him. "When shall we see each other again?"

He twirled his hat. "Dorrie, you must be a good girl—be sane and sensible."

"Yes—yes?"

"Now you've been rash about Hugh. My advice is to fix it up. He'll overlook it. He's crazy about you." He stopped at the expression on her face. "Love you, precious? . . . Good Lord, yes. But I can't move hand or foot now! . . . We'll not see each other for a while. Perhaps things will blow over."

He was shedding things with his easy optimism, escaping her. She watched him go with a hurt curve on her red lips, and a stony feeling in her chest.

Her thoughts flew here and there like frantic caged birds. Hugh—there was only Hugh.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



NOTES NECESSARY

A negro preacher called on a white minister and found the latter writing. "What you doin'?" asked the colored parson.

"I'm preparing my notes for next Sunday's sermon."

"I suttinly nevah would do that. Don't you know the debbil is looking right ovah your shouldah an' knows everything yo' gwine t' say? Now, I don't make no notes, and when I gets up to talk, neither me nor th' debbil himself knows what I'm gwine t' say."

MODERN WIFIE



Mr. Newlywed—Why have you those fashion plates out in addition to the cook book, my dear?

Mrs. Newlywed—I thought I'd need both in making flannel cakes.

A Different Matter

Alf Alfey—How long has that hired man worked for you?

Rube Barbe—About two days, I guess.

Alf—I thought he had been here more than a month.

Rube—He has.—Exchange.

On the Fairways

Golfer—Listen, kid, I'll swat you with a club if you don't stop wisecracking me about my game!

Caddie—Yeah, but you wouldn't know which club to use!—Minneapolis Journal.

Another Optimist

"And so you've got to wear glasses, Joan?"

Joan (aged 9): "Yes, perhaps; but Mamma says she's going to have my eyes tested by another opti-

Reversed Travel

Farmer—Gosh! You must be brave to come down with a parachute in a gale like that.

Stranger (grumpily)—I didn't come down with a parachute, I went up with a tent.

Instantaneous

Mrs. Gabbie (Showing Photo to Husband)—This is an instantaneous picture of myself.

Mr. Gabbie—I can see that without having it told. Your mouth is shut.

SOME DIFFERENCE



Aunt—I understand Tom gives you plenty of money.

Mrs. Justwed—No. What I said was Tom thinks he gives me plenty.

Sunshine Surflet

"You must look on the sunny side of life," said the gentle friend.

"That's just what I'm tired of doing," answered Farmer Cornstossel.

"After this drouth what I want to do is to trade off sunshine for rain, thunder and lightning."

Chance Acquaintance

Bystander—Miss the train?

Traveler—Oh, thank you, I don't think so, at least not much. I might have in time, but I never got to know it really well, you see.

Time Out

Stew—Why does a dog turn around three times before lying down?

Pidd—If the animal be a watch dog, fellow, I should say he is trying to wind himself up!

Going Yet

Solicitor—In that case you may have grounds for a separation. When did your husband desert you?

Client—Last night. I stopped to look in a milliner's window—and he walked on!

On Judging Characters—

Some Views to Hold in the Reading of Modern Books

THE desire to belittle the characters of those who have been held in high esteem for years, even for generations, is only excelled in these times by the determination to make heroes of those whose reputations have been unsavory. There is, of course, in all things a happy medium. No one is all good. No one is all bad. But it is the predominance of virtue or vice which sets its stamp on persons' characters, and causes them to be estimated good or bad accordingly.

Writers of biography are seldom readers. One of the greatest difficulties is in really getting at the truth about persons whether they be dead or alive. Biographers, living in the same period as those of whom they write, are unable to make delineations free from personal ideas or estimations, especially if the person about whom they are writing is known to them.

Individual View Point.

It is for readers to make their own discoveries. They have this privilege and they should take it. Get acquainted with the facts as much as possible through perusing more than one biography. Get more than one other person's point of view. There are great men. There are little ones. To learn a few derogatory things about the former does not make them unworthy natures. The balance remains still for virtue. To find out good qualities in poor characters is delightful, but so long as flagrant misdeeds can merely be mollified and not erased, the person has to stand the brunt of his own deeds.

Well Tempered Judgment.

In reading biographies and in studying human nature it is well always to bear in mind that ex-

temperating circumstances are present. Rarely are they absent totally. There are certain situations which exist, and complications which arise to influence action. Knowing these we become less harsh in adverse judgments, or more laudatory in favorable estimations according to how the character acts. We learn to detect the difference between the desire to undermine a fine character or to establish a poor one as good.

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That Little Difference

It is just the little difference between the good and the best that makes the difference between artists and the artisan.

Much better does a prune taste out of a barrel in a grocery store than stewed and on the table.

Those who get up early in the morning think everybody else should; but those who get up very late don't usually move the world. If you can't agree with the tastes of the people, you are in for much loneliness.

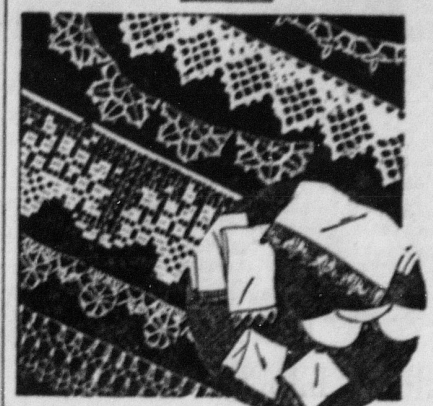
Difficult Rebuilding

Rebuilding a ruined house or a ruined career is a much more difficult matter than building new. It takes more courage, more skill and more ability. But it is being done every day.

Scolding may not mean much, but laughing doesn't make the baby cry.

Environment makes the man; and it also makes him change it.

Lots of Variety in Crocheted Edgings



Pattern 1300

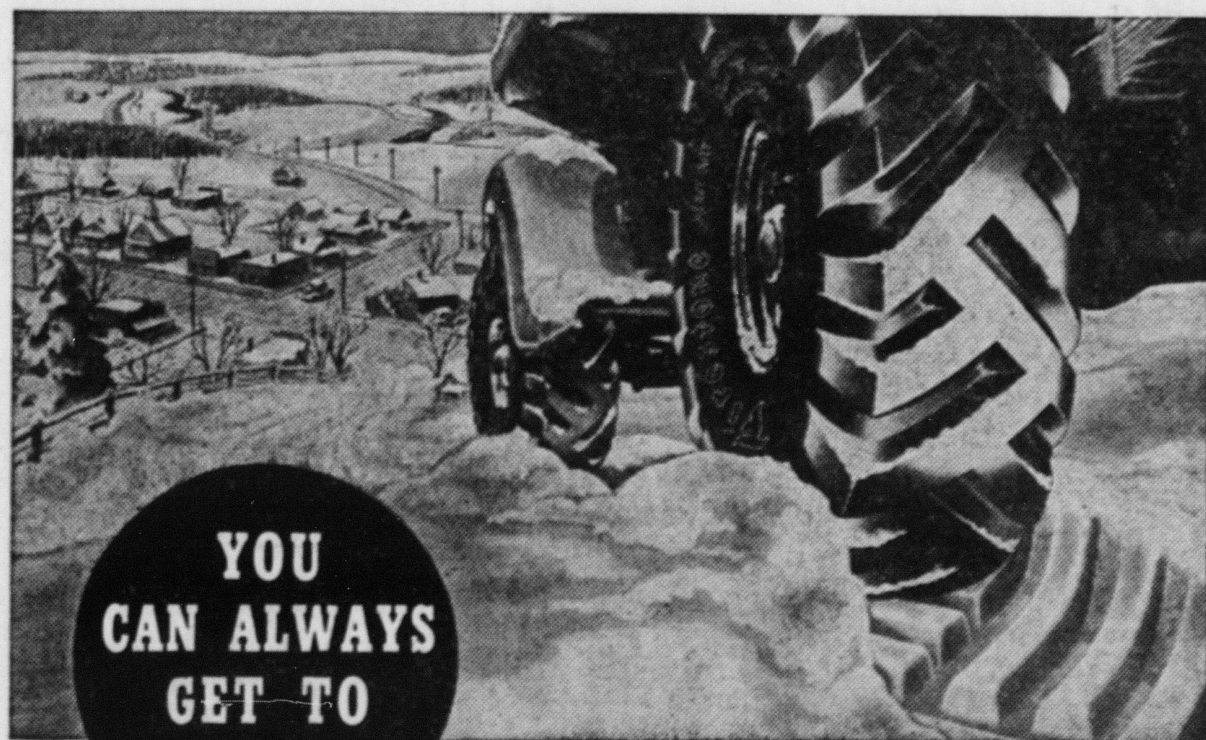
Wonderfully dainty edgings, the laciest of borders, can roll off your crochet hook if you have pattern 1300. You can crochet an inexpensive bit of dress-up for collar and cuff set, lingerie, hankies, towels, sheets, cases and napkins. The top edging simulates tatting but is easier and quicker to do. Even a beginner will find this pattern simple to follow. Pattern 1300 contains detailed directions for making the edgings shown; illustrations of them and of all stitches used; material requirements.

Send 15 cents in stamps or coins (coins preferred) for this pattern to The Sewing Circle, Needlecraft Dept., 82 Eighth Ave., New York, N. Y.

Write plainly pattern number, your name and address.

Wild Men Film Fans

The wild men of Borneo are becoming modernized. Instead of head-hunting, their chief hobby is collecting pictures of film stars. Travelers report that trophies hung round the Dyak tribal huts, in addition to enemy skulls now include the portraits of glamorous Hollywood actresses torn from old magazines.



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