SHINING PALACE

By CHRISTINE WHITING PARMENTER

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CHAPTER VII—Continued

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And now the nostalgia of the afternoon was back again. Strange, Nora pondered, that Don, sleeping so peacefully beside her—Don, who understood people so well, so quickly, shouldn't have known by instinct that to go so far away while the black cloud of her father's anger lay between them, would hurt his wife. Yet she was glad, too, that he hadn't guessed, thought Nora, with all the inconsistency of woman. Why mar his happiness in the adventure? If she could keep a stiff upper lip till they were once away . . .

"Nora—are—are you awake, dear?"

Don's voice was cautious, as if he feared to rouse her, and Nora turned.

"I thought you were asleep yourself, Don."

"I wasn't! I've been lying here thinking—trying to see the thing we ought to do. I know what's troubling you, dearest. I knew this afternoon, only I wanted time to think a little before I spoke. It's your father, isn't it? You hate to leave him?"

"Oh, Don!" breathed Nora, turning her face into the shadows. She must not cry. He mustn't know how much she wanted to.

He said, gently: "I understand, dear. It's only because he is still angry. You're afraid something might happen to him—that he might need you when you couldn't come. Isn't that it? If you were friends the parting would be so different. It's the terrible misunderstanding that makes it hard. I was a dumbbell not to see it sooner, Nora. Why didn't you tell me?"

"How could I?"

Don managed a little laugh which broke the tension.

"You couldn't—you being yourself—and I being I! But you should have, Nora. As I see it, marriage is a sort of compromise. We can't, either of us, expect to have our own way eternally. But until this afternoon I didn't imagine for one minute that you weren't crazy for an Italian winter. You're a better actress than I thought, my dear; and in the future I'll have to watch my step! But it's never too late to change our plans, you know. That's one of the reasons life's so thrilling. And I've been thinking about the West. There are places—"

Nora sat up suddenly, drawing his head down against her breast. "If you think that I'll let you change . . .

She was crying now. Somehow Don raised his head and got his arms about her. He said, with more unselfishness than truth: "But I won't mind changing—not a little bit! There's a lot to interest us in the Southwest, and you've never been there. If those tears will help you, Nora, why keep right on, but they're almost killing me! As I was saying—"

Then Nora laughed. It was an hysterical laugh, perhaps, but it cleared the atmosphere.

"You can keep on saying things all night," she told him, "but we're sailing tomorrow. Once we really get away I shall feel better. Have you forgotten those articles you're going to write for that London editor? Have you forgotten you've a family to support? Of course we're going to Capri!" With every word she was getting back her courage. "And besides, I wrote Dad we were sailing. I thought perhaps he'd come to the boat, Don. Don't—don't you think he might come to the boat?"

"He might," Don echoed; and to himself: "How can he stay away? How can he hurt her so? How can he?" Yet somehow, he knew instinctively that Nora's father was not yet ready to forgive.

They sailed next afternoon, a bright, clear, sparkling day that cheered Nora immeasurably, despite James Lambert's absence from the scene. Standing beside the rail, her eyes searching the thronged pier hungrily, hoping until the final whistle sounded that she would catch a glimpse of his familiar face, the girl's mind went back to her last sailing. She saw again the crowd of youthful friends waving farewell—Ned, moved by one of his rare impulses (those impulses which made him almost lovable) arriving breathless with a box of roses—kissing her like a real brother . . . And her father—dear Dad! trying so hard to put a cheerful face upon this parting she knew he hated—saying: "Don't stint yourself, Nora." (As if she ever had!) . . . "Remember my London bankers if you need money." (As if she wouldn't!) . . . "Be careful about the drinking water in those filthy places." (To Dad all Europe was unsanitary) . . . "Be sure to cable as soon as the boat docks."

It all came back; and suddenly Nora was conscious of a great loneliness. Her carefree girlhood seemed left far, far behind. Ahead lay motherhood—mystery—that ultimate struggle which she must face alone. The thought frightened her, as one is sometimes frightened at a stark glimpse of the inevitable. She turned, seeking the reassurance of Don's presence; but he had discovered a friend among the passengers: a little woman who, Nora thought, looked like a missionary.

And then, almost weirdly in that last confusing moment—breaking through shouts of "All ashore" and shrieking sirens, the certainty that though she could not see him her father was somewhere amid that throng—too proud to speak, yet loving her too greatly to stay away, fell on the girl's bruised heart like balm.

The gangplank was up now—the boat moving. Nora pressed closer to the rail—raised her arm high—waved a white wisp of handkerchief and shouted with a hundred others: "Good-by . . . Good-by . . ."

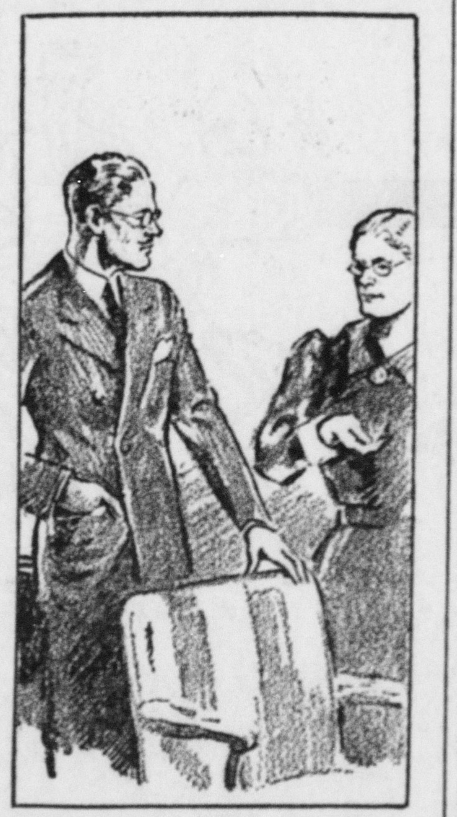
"Who was it, dear?" The voice was Don's. His hand closed over her possessively. Such a strong hand! "Who was it, Nora? I saw you waving. Find someone you knew in all that jam?"

His wife looked up. Her eyes were wet, but with a deep sense of thankfulness Don saw that they were happy eyes.

"I—I was just—waving," said Nora simply.

CHAPTER VIII

On the evening of the day when Don and Leonora sailed for Italy, Ned Lambert looked up from a leisurely perusal of the evening paper, and exclaimed: "Of all things! Mr. and Mrs. Donald Mason on the passenger list of the Larino! They sailed today. Do you suppose Dad knew it?"



"The house is so still without Miss Nora."

Corinne, painstakingly wading through the most talked of novel of the month and bored to death by it, laid down the book with a sense of momentary release.

"He must know. I dare say he's paying for the trip. How else could they manage it? Your father may pretend he doesn't help them, Ned; but can you see him denying Nora anything she may have set her heart on? Of course he knows."

"I'm not so sure." Ned arose, walked uneasily across the room and back again, pausing beside her chair. "I'm not so sure," he repeated. "Dad never speaks of Nora; and once, when I ventured to ask a question about Don, he shut me up in a way he hasn't done since I was twelve years old! That's straight, Corinne. I don't know that he ever hears from her; but if he happens to see this passenger list and discovers that she's left the country, it may upset him. Want to go 'round and see how the land lies?"

Corinne glanced at the novel.

"I really can't, Ned. This book is to be reviewed at the club tomorrow, and unless I'm willing to appear a—a moron, I've got to finish it. And it's the dullest thing I ever tackled. Long, solid pages without a word of conversation. Run along by yourself. I'll try to get through it before bedtime."

Ned laughed. Though he kept it well throttled, he was not without a mild sense of humor, and his wife's struggle to do the proper thing sometimes amused him.

"I'd rather be considered almost anything than to read a book which bored me to that extent," he told her frankly. "Sure you won't go? I sha'n't stay long; and we both need exercise. Mustn't get tubby as we get old, Corinne."

"Tubby!" Corinne, who was proud of her expensively corsetted figure, bristled with indignation. "You'd better compare me with other women of my age, not with those slinky stenographers in your office. But I can't go anyhow, even if I do need exercise. I must write to Junior. He may be homesick these first days at school."

"That's right," said Ned. "Give the kid my love, dear; but please don't send him any money. His allowance is ample; and it isn't good for a boy of his age to have too much."

Corinne smiled pleasantly; nodded good-by; and said to herself as the front door closed: "Well, I didn't promise, and it won't do a bit of harm to slip in something. A boy likes to make a good impression on his schoolmates; and considering our position in society Junior's allowance isn't what it should be. That's Father Lambert's doings. He's forever harping on the notion that too much spending money spoils a boy; yet when it came to Nora nothing was too much for her to throw away. I'll write the letter now, before Ned gets back."

Ned Lambert reached his father's house and, inserting a latch key, opened the door quietly, dropped his hat onto a chair, and went toward the living room. Nobody here! Perhaps his father was in the library. Ned moved down the hall. A fire blazed cheerily on the hearth in this smaller room, but the davenport with its gorgeous Bokhara covering on which James sometimes threw himself for an after-dinner nap, was now unoccupied.

Dad must be away, thought Ned. It was stupid not to have called up before walking over; but his father hadn't mentioned an engagement, and he seldom went out evenings these days. Perhaps one of the maids would know. Ah! here was Martha. Good old Martha, ever on the alert for burglars! She'd heard his prowling and . . .

"Oh, it's you, Mr. Ned! I thought it might be someone who didn't belong here."

Ned smiled.

"You're a good watchman, Martha. Is Father out?"

"He's upstairs, Mr. Ned."

"Upstairs! Isn't he feeling well?"

"He had John light the fire in Miss Nora's room. He's taken to sitting there quite often."

"He has?"

Ned's eyes looked puzzled, and with a cautious glance toward the wide stairway, Martha closed the door. Corinne once said that Martha Berry was as much a part of James Lambert's fine old house as the front door was. She had lived there for half of her more than fifty years, keeping his house beautifully, a faithful servant of the old order, and a friend to all who bore the name of Lambert. She said, reading the question in Ned's eyes:

"It's this way, Mr. Ned: The house is so—so still, you see, without Miss Nora. It's like a tomb. Even my cook notices the difference." (To Martha Berry James Lambert's servants were her own.) "She would have given warning weeks ago if I hadn't scolded her. I said: 'Don't be a fool, Sally. There's no one else can make a black bean soup that sets well on Mr. Lambert's stomach, and he's very fond of it,' so she stayed on. But she says the stillness makes her nervous, Mr. Ned, and I think she's right.

"The coffee wasn't clear this morning. Your father likes old-fashioned coffee, made with an egg. There's none better, but it has to be made with care or the grounds won't settle. Sally's as good a cook as I ever had. She knows your father's ways, and she's good tempered; but she misses Miss Nora. Your father likes her cooking but he doesn't tell her so. Why should he? But Miss Nora was always running into the kitchen. She'd say: 'Oh, Sally, that cream pie was simply wonderful!' or, 'Don't you ever dare get married and leave us, Sally. I could die happy eating your potato puff. —You know her way, Mr. Ned—not dignified maybe, but my girls loved her and it kept them happy. My housemaid cries now when she dusts the piano. She always left the door ajar when Miss Nora was playing, and many's the time Miss Nora asked her in to listen.

"You can see for yourself that it's not the same place without your sister; and Mr. Lambert feels it. That's why he sits there in her room so much. It makes her seem nearer. I know as well as if he'd told me, which he'd die rather than do, or my name's not Martha Berry. He's stubborn, your father, if you'll excuse my saying so. Not that he isn't the finest man that ever lived, as I've reason to know if ever anybody had.

"You were a boy at the time, but in my mother's long illness he paid all her bills. If she had been his own mother he couldn't have done more; and he sent my nieces to business college, too. But for all that he can be stubborn when he gets a notion into his head; and there've been times during the last 30 years when if I hadn't known my place, Mr. Ned, I would have thrown things at him."

Martha spoke so seriously, and looked so like the ideal servant she really was, that it was impossible for Ned Lambert to suppress entirely a laugh at the idea of her throwing teacups at his father. And being herself not utterly devoid of humor, the woman surmised his thought and smiled, a respectful little smile as she continued:

"Maybe you're thinking I don't know my place, after all. Maybe you think I'm an old meddler; but you were a little boy when I came here, Mr. Ned, and it was I opened the door for your poor father the day he came home carrying Miss Nora, and she looking like nobody at all—poor lamb!—in her outgrown coat. Never will I forget her thin little wrists coming out o' those coat sleeves; and her big, sad eyes, and the trustful way she looked up at Mr. Lambert when he set her down.

"You see, you're my family, all of you, Mr. Ned; and I can't bear that your father's stubbornness should break his own heart and Miss Nora's too.

"He should remember that this is the United States, not one of those foreign countries he hates to travel in where folks pick out husbands for their daughters and hands 'em over like they was bags of meal. And it's a good boy she's married. He gave me his seat in the subway one o' my days off when I was going out to my niece Clara's to have supper. It takes a gentleman to give up his seat to a woman he's seen wearing her cap and apron—an old woman too, and not good looking!

"Now go up to your father, Mr. Ned; and if you can make him see that it's only a mule that'll bite off its nose to spite its face, it'll save him a heartache."

She opened the door, then as Ned remained silent, added stiffly, remembering "her place": "I beg pardon if I've offended, Mr. Ned."

It was then that Ned Lambert gave way to one of the impulses his wife deplored ("Oh, Ned! she's only a servant!") — an impulse that would have made Nora cheer. Perhaps he was remembering the times when in some childhood illness Martha had sat by his bed through the long, dark hours of night, "keeping him company." Or that it was Martha he went to for comfort on that terrible day when, a heartbroken lad of nine, he learned that his mother was never coming home. Whatever it was, Ned crossed the space between them and put his arm around those faithful shoulders in a boyish hug.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Squash, Pumpkin, Cucumber, Melon, Gourd Found in Distinctive Class of Its Own

"All the pumpkin tribes are among the marvels of the vegetable world," writes Dr. H. L. Bailey, famous horticulturist. The point that he makes is the result of years of experiment with the various members of the pumpkin, squash, cucumber, melon and gourd family.

For many years students of horticulture have attempted the crossing of pumpkins and squashes to produce hybrids only to prove that each of the species falls into a distinct class of its own. They have evolved into individual groups, just as man has evolved into the human being and cannot be crossed successfully with another species in the animal world.

The "marvel" to which Bailey refers is the vast variety of pumpkins, squashes, cucumbers, melons and gourds, all going back to an original form, called by botanists Cucurbitacae, but no longer reverting to the prehistoric type. Although the pumpkin and the squash are thought of as two of our most common garden vegetables, they should be regarded as amazing because of the countless number of forms.

Take the gourd for example, a popular member of the Cucurbitacae family. There are all sizes and shapes of gourds. Not only does their form vary, but their color differs also. They may be striped or spotted, squatty or tapering, yellow or purple. Some have bumps and others are smooth. But all of them are gourds — not pumpkins or squashes. Although they are members of the same family, they are definite species and cannot be crossed with other species, such as the pumpkin and the squash, to produce fertile hybrids.

Only Dickens Statue

A statue of Charles Dickens and little Nell, one of his famous characters, is in Clark park, at Forty-third street and Baltimore avenue, in West Philadelphia. It is the only one ever made of the novelist, says a writer in the Philadelphia Inquirer, because his son discovered a clause in his will asking "never on any account to make me the subject of any monument, memorial or testimonial whatever." The work is by F. Edwin Elwell. It was exhibited at the World's Columbian exposition, where it received a gold medal.

Setter

By THERESA KRASTIN

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SHORT SHORT STORY

I GREW up with Wink (christened Wesley) Graydon. He always reminded me of an auburn Irish setter (I told him so, too)—in more ways than one. His hair was close-curled to his head, dark red in color; his eyes contained clear brown deeps, with patient glances of devotion shining in their shadows, like stars reflected in a dark lake. Even his body resembled that of a loping, lank setter, for it was loosely adjusted.

I have said that there was devotion in his eyes. Like a true dog, Wink did not offer his fealty to all comers. No; I must lay aside modesty to tell you that I was the sole recipient. Not that Wink ever told me in so many words that he liked me best. He used deeds, silently performed; and I, selfish little tyrant, accepted all his gifts of service as a matter of course and right. I never needed to exert myself while Wink was in my vicinity.

After graduation from high school, we both went to college. Wink wrote me friendly letters at regular periods, which I answered—irregularly. We did not even meet during the long summer vacations, for Wink spent the greater part of his free months working at his college.

By the time I reached my senior year, he was such a faraway memory that I became engaged without even a thought of him.

I was very happy in my love for Barrett. What girl isn't when she loves for the first time? I had high ideals, but he appeared more than to satisfy them.

But as long as I live I shall never forget the look in Wink's eyes when I saw him for the first time since my engagement. The stars were still in his eyes, but they were misty, cloudy. More: they contained pain, like that of a dog who has been kicked, but does not whimper.

"Wink, what's wrong?" I asked, hurriedly, in sudden unaccustomed embarrassment.

"Nothing, Betty," he replied. "I do hope you'll be awfully happy. You deserve the best."

He turned his head away, quickly, but not hastily enough to keep me from noticing the rapid winks of his eyelashes (that's how he got his nickname; when they go like that he's either very happy or very sad).

Understanding came to me. Wink cared for me as I loved Barrett. I took his hand and pulled him down on the steps where we were standing. Then I laid his head on my knee and stroked the shining red curls. He was such a boy!

"We can be friends just the same, can't we, Bets?" he brought forth from the shield of his hands. I was too much choked to reply. He lifted his head for an answer. The stars in his eyes were clear again; they sent a little tremor through me. I didn't know that anyone except Barrett could make me feel like that. Why had he not told me that he cared in that way?

"Of course, we'll be friends," I returned gayly. "You'll marry some nice girl and then we'll have the gayest old bridge games and parties together."

Wink smiled gallantly, patted my hand, and proposed a tennis match.

This happened in June. Barrett planned to visit my home in August. In the middle of July, however, I received a letter from him which broke my romance as the wind shatters an airy bubble.

After that, there was nothing left for me but to get work and to disappear from my own town until the heartbreak softened. Fortunately, I was able to secure a teaching position in a tiny country village. No one except my mother knew my address; and I gave her strict injunctions not to disclose it under any circumstances.

Then, one spring afternoon, as I was finishing some work after school, I looked up to see Wink (with his eyelashes winking very fast indeed) standing in front of my desk. I rubbed my eyes until they hurt before I was convinced of his reality.

"Wink! How did you find me? Did mother—"

"Nope. You forget you can't shake a setter!"

"Please—don't tease," I begged, gulping on a salty tear which had slipped down my nose and into my mouth before I was aware of it.

"I was calling on your mother yesterday, and saw a letter of yours lying on the table. Of course, I looked at the postmark; it was easy to find you in this small place." He came around to my side and lifted me by the elbows. "Dear, come back to us, and to me. I love you."

The stars in his eyes were twinkly and beckoning; again I felt stirred. Why, Wink had the power to awaken me; and now I did not need to deny him, for I was free.

"My love is no longer shining and new, Wink. Will you want it, tarnished and worn?"

For answer, he kissed me; and then setter-like, he put his head between my hands.

WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

Bachelor Has 200,000 Odd Gadgets

NEW YORK.—It is perhaps just as well that Crosby Gaige is a bachelor. He drags home 200,000 patent models, including a corpse preserver, hog-catcher, burglar alarm, an early Hoe printing press, a dentist's chair, a machine gun, an egg-beater, an engine, a steamboat, a pretzel-bending machine—and so on—and on.

The patent office models had been gathered by the late Sir Henry Wellcome and kept at his estate in 3,251 packing cases. Mr. Gaige bought them.

A friend of this writer, remembering with remorse he hadn't bought a birthday present for his wife, stepped into an auction room. He became confused and bought ten barrels of tin cookie cutters. It almost broke up his home. Mr. Gaige will have no such trouble.

Mr. Gaige was born the son of the postmaster at Skunk Hollow, N. Y., and became a Broadway theatrical producer, with a 300-acre estate at Peekskill on the Hudson, where he indulges his taste for knickknacks such as the above, but with more discrimination than this ensemble suggests.

He is a gourmet, with 300 cook books in his kitchen, has a de luxe machine shop where he makes art objects, is a master of viticulture and a maker and connoisseur of beautiful wines.

He has cattle folds and breeds blooded cattle, a printing plant where he prints typographical knock-outs in limited editions, a huge library with 5,000 reference books, and is distinguished both as a bibliophile and a cook—one of the best cooks in the world, his friends say.

Theaters Out of Red for 29 Years

All these concerns are merely extra-curricular. In his 29 years on Broadway, he has hit off his full share of successes, built three theaters and kept steadily out of the red. In Columbia university, he wrote the 1903 varsity show, "Illusia."

He got a job with the late Elisabeth Marbury, famous play broker, reading plays at ten cents an act. He saved his money and headed into the show business with a fast running start.

His life is the fulfillment of every commuter's dream. He is of clerical, almost monkish mien, of somewhat austere countenance, with octagonal pince-nez and, like all epicures, abstemious in all things—saving such things as patent models.

He wears red, white and blue suspenders and is very fussy about his handkerchief pocket. He always has the tailor sew a button on it.

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Sore Throat Gave Start to Screen Ace

AN ATTACK of laryngitis gave Margaret Sullavan her big start. Lee Shubert saw her in "Three Artists and a Lady" at Princeton, and rushed back-stage with a contract.

"You have a voice just like Ethel Barrymore," he said.

She explained that it was merely laryngitis, but the excited Mr. Shubert wouldn't listen. There was nothing to be done about it, so the helpless girl was signed for five years.

That was a bit of luck which, in Miss Sullavan's career, offsets embarrassing entanglements in some of the most elaborate flops in current stage history. Today, she is at the peak of her career as critics turn cartwheels and back flips over the new film, "Three Comrades," and Miss Sullavan's performance therein.

Her story has none of the up-from-poverty success routine. She is the daughter of a prideful family of Norfolk, Va., a descendant of Robert E. Lee. Her journey to Boston to study dancing was indulged as a passing whim, but there was considerable family eye-rolling when she switched to the theater and began adventuring in summer stock, on Cape Cod and way points.

Her father got her home once, but only for a short time. It is to be hoped that her story won't be widely circulated around Hollywood. It would start all the extra girls sleeping in a draft.

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The Average Month

We are apt to think of our present months as having four weeks apiece, but that is not true. The average month contains just about four and one-third weeks. The only month with four weeks in it is February, and in leap year even February has one day over four weeks.