

SHINING PALACE

By CHRISTINE WHITING PARMENTER

COPYRIGHT BY CHRISTINE WHITING PARMENTER - WNU SERVICE

CHAPTER VIII—Continued

"Offended! How could you possibly offend a Lambert, Martha, after all you've done for us? But there's more to this business than you understand." The man's face darkened. He was recalling a hot June day—a blow that had left his jaw lame for a week. "There are things one can't forgive, or . . ."

He paused, not knowing just how to proceed; and the woman said, in the gentle way she had told him many truths in the years gone by: "Excuse me, Mr. Ned, but there's nothing we can't forgive—if we care enough. Run along up now. Run up and see your father."

"And when I got there," Ned told his wife later that evening, "Dad was sitting in the big wing-chair in Nora's bedroom. There was a fire on the hearth, and the place did look more—well, more cheerful, perhaps, than the rooms downstairs. He was reading a letter, but when he glanced up and saw me he stuffed it into a pocket, which made me wonder if it was from Leonora. I thought—honestly, Corinne, I sort of felt that he didn't like my finding him there. He got right up and said: 'Why didn't you telephone? If I'd known you were coming over I'd have been downstairs.'"

"Did you go down then?"

"No. It was plain he wanted to; but I said: 'Sit still, Dad. I'm only going to stay a minute. Did you know that Nora sailed for Italy this afternoon?' You see, Corinne, I thought it was better to speak right out. I felt, after what Martha'd said, that it might do him good to talk, if he once got started."

"What'd he say?"

"Nothing, for just a minute. I think my question took him a bit off guard. But you know Dad! He can always pull himself together. And after a minute he said quietly: 'Yes, I know.' That's all, Corinne. It made me feel almost uncomfortable—as if he'd said: 'It's none of your business, Ned. Get along home.' You know what I mean."

"Oh, yes, I know!" Corinne's eyes narrowed unpleasantly. "He made me feel that way just after Nora left, when I was trying to tell him that he'd done exactly right. I'm fond of your father, Ned, but there are times when he irritates me to distraction."

A vision of the faithful Martha slinging teacups, caused Ned Lambert to smile a little. Then his wife asked: "Did you speak of Nora any more?"

"We did because I rather forced the subject—not because I was curious, you know, but I wanted to help him if I could. Dad's had such a lot of trouble through his family, Corinne. I've always—ever since I was old enough to think about it—wanted to feel that I, who've never gone against his wishes, had made it up to him. But tonight, sitting there in Nora's bedroom, it came over me that I was accountable for this last break that's hurt him more than anything since the trouble with my—my mother."

"You accountable!" Corinne closed the most talked of novel of the month, forgot its 50 unread pages, and gave him her entire attention. "Of all the absurd statements! What would your father have had you do when that fellow hit you? Turn the other cheek?"

"It was a jaw, dear," Ned reminded her in a feeble attempt at humor. He hated his wife to get "worked up."

"If that's supposed to be funny," she retorted, "I don't see the joke. Why, you were black and blue! If your father hadn't stood by you he'd have been a beast, Ned. Well, what else did you say?"

"Not much. I ventured the remark that I wondered how their trip was financed; and Father answered with that uncanny way he has of understanding something you haven't said: 'Well, I didn't finance it, if that's troubling you.' That riled me a little, I'll admit, but I kept my temper. I felt so sorry for him, Corinne. I've never thought of my father as being an old man; but he looked old tonight, old and unhappy. I decided not to say anything further about Nora; and then with the best intention in the world, I put my foot in it!"

"How?"

Ned smiled, regretfully.

"It was this way: As the atmosphere seemed a little strained I got up and began moving about the room. That's such a beautiful room, Corinne."

"Beautiful! That shows your ignorance of such things, Ned." Corinne spoke as one with authority. "I'll admit it has a sort of charm; but it's no special period, so in an artistic way it's not correct. Why, that wing-chair you spoke of is covered with flowered chintz—and there are silk hangings at the windows! Imagine making such an error. And the bed and bureau are early American, while the rug (which must have cost your father a small fortune, too) is Oriental. Besides, so many books are out of

place in a bedroom. Any good decorator would tell you that. But Nora refused any advice, you know; and that room's just like her. Awfully pretty if you admire that sort of thing, but—well it's really a hodge-podge."

"A damn fine hodge-podge," retorted Ned. "And it was that early American bed that made the trouble. I've always thought it the handsomest bed I ever saw. I stopped beside it to admire one of the posts. I never expected to stir Dad up when I asked where it came from. He didn't answer right away, so I turned around and—honestly, Corinne, he looked as if someone had struck him. Then he pulled himself up and said: 'It came from a country auction down in Maine. It was a rainy day. Only one antique dealer to compete with and he didn't know his business. I got that bed for forty dollars.'"

"I said: 'You certainly got a bargain, and any time you want to get rid of it . . .'"

"Well?" prodded Corinne as her husband stopped.

"That, it seems, was my mistake. Father said, and his voice was exactly as cold as if I'd been some smart Aleck trying to get the better of him in a business deal,



"What do I care about a son."

"That bed is not mine to get rid of, as you unpleasantly put it. It belongs to my daughter." Just that, Corinne.

Ned's wife sat up so suddenly on the chaise longue that the great American novel dropped unheeded to the floor.

"He has no right to answer you like that, Ned. I hope you told him so."

"Oh, calm down, my dear. I didn't have to. I guess he saw by my face how awfully surprised I was, for he came over and put his arm across my shoulders—said I mustn't pay any attention to him—that he was upset about something. We didn't quarrel. Never have, you know. We sat down again and talked about nothing in particular—the stock market—the weather—anything in fact, except Nora! He promised to go to bed soon as I left."

But James Lambert didn't go to bed just then. He sat quite still in Nora's big wing-chair ("I want one big enough to curl all up in, Daddy!") until he heard the front door close and knew that he would not be interrupted. Then he drew from a pocket the letter he was reading when Ned came in. Not that he didn't know it pretty well by heart, having already perused it a dozen times, as he did all Nora's letters. His eyes lingered on the signature—those childish black crosses below it. James knew instinctively that she had kissed them as she used to in the days of little-girlhood. The same Nora, and yet not the same . . . Never, never, he vowed with stubborn bitterness, would she be the same to him . . . Never again would he let her get near enough to hurt him . . .

And then, softly: "I wonder if she could possibly have seen me, there on the pier . . . I don't believe so . . . I kept well back until the very last, and there was such a crowd . . . But it was strange, too, the way she waved at the last moment . . . very strange . . . I could have sworn, even at that distance, that her face brightened . . ."

CHAPTER IX

It is a wise Providence that blinds our eyes to what lies ahead. Nora little thought as she stood on the deck of the Larino with Don's hand on hers, that she would be twice a mother before she saw her native land again—that she was to descend into the shadow of death herself—that she was to watch fine lines etched by the ruthless hand of Care gather about Don's happy, sea-blue

eyes—that she was to fight for the life of a little boy tossing with fever in far off Cape Town.

Her first son was born in England on a May night. The winter had gone well. As Carl Venable promised, Don's "Letters from Capri" were welcomed with enthusiasm by the London editor; and the same letters (supplemented by thumbnail sketches by the great Venable) found a ready market in America.

And living in Italy was inexpensive. Nora soon made a home of the tiny pink villa with its glimpse of sapphire waters and rocky hillsides, which Constance Venable had ready for their arrival.

"This is the most heavenly spot," (she wrote her father) "and I'm fast becoming a thrifty Italian housewife, or should be if I weren't compelled to stop my work every few minutes to drink in the beauties of this twin-humped camel of an island, kneeling so gently in the blue, blue waters of the Mediterranean. It's well worth the effort of climbing the million or so steps that lead to our front door (I can hear you say, 'Don't exaggerate, Nora. It's a bad habit!'), to gaze down on this wealth of flowers and foliage. Nature was in a lavish mood when she fashioned Capri. I wish you could see it, Dad. In fact, the only thing needed to make me supremely happy would be to look out some day and discover that my handsome father had overcome his prejudice against every country not flying the Stars and Stripes, and was climbing that rocky path, though he wouldn't have breath enough to kiss me when he reached the top . . ."

"The Venables are only five minutes walk (perhaps I should say climb) away; and if you could look upon the seascape Ven's painting now, you'd mortgage the house to possess it. Incidentally, they have a beautiful piano on which they seem to consider it an honor for me to practice; so my fingers won't grow stiff, as I had feared they might. There are four young Venables ranging from sixteen to six—such jolly youngsters! And their mother is every bit as good a mother to me as she is to them, though she can't be fifteen years my senior . . ."

This was quite true. Nora had not counted on Constance Venable in vain. "You say it's to be in May?" the older woman questioned thoughtfully. And then: "We must take you to England. Not that babies don't arrive daily in Italy!" she smiled; "but my Phil was born in London and I had a most skillful doctor. The nurse was a wonder, too. I'll write at once and engage her for you, Nora. I'll arrange everything. You'll want a room in a nursing home; and I'll write the doctor. We were planning to sail for New York the first of May. I must tell Carl to put it off another month."

And no protest on the part of Leonora would make her change. "Of course I shall stay with you!" she said, almost indignantly. "Don't you know that our Alice wouldn't be here if it weren't for Don? He kept on working over her when everybody told him it was useless. Nothing you ever ask of us, Nora, will be too much."

What Don and Nora never knew, was that half the expenses incurred by the arrival of this first son of theirs, were paid by Carl Venable, who would have paid them all had it been possible to do so without arousing Don's suspicions. All the young couple ever knew was that the bills were far, far less than they'd anticipated; for Nora was very sick indeed.

Don sometimes wished he could

forget that nightmare time when the firm hand of an English doctor thrust him unceremoniously from the bare, white room which sheltered Nora.

"Get outside and sit down, my dear chap," he commanded briskly. "She won't suffer any more."

He had a very English accent, that doctor, which made Don wonder if the man were quite efficient! There was a bench in the corridor and he sank down on it, very weak as to knees; wondering how long this horrible business would go on; why the universe had to be populated in such a manner; and what for had they sent him out and let Connie Venable stay inside?

And after an interval which seemed hours, there came from beyond that door a cry like nothing he had ever heard before, but Don knew it instantly for the wail of his first-born. It was then that all the remaining strength went out of him, and he wiped the sweat from his forehead and said: "Thank God it's over!" But no one came from Nora's room except a nurse. She had a blanket-wrapped bundle in her arms, and was hurrying so fast she didn't see him; but when she returned a minute later without the bundle, Don caught her skirt, and though his question wouldn't seem to come, the girl appeared to understand and told him hastily: "It's a boy. A splendid little boy, but . . ."

And with that "but" he was left alone again. The door closed, though during the moment it had opened a strong and sickish scent of ether drifted out to him. It was Constance Venable who came next (after a lifetime, it seemed to Don, with that nurse's ominous "but" still ringing in his ears); and with one look into Connie's face his heart stopped beating. Literally. He told Nora afterwards that he died for a minute. And then Constance sat down and took his hand. She said: "You've a son, Don—a beautiful little boy"—and he broke in harshly: "What do I care about a son? What's happened to Nora?"

Constance was still stroking his hand as he'd seen her stroke the hands of her children when she wished to calm them. She answered: "Nora will be all right, Don. I don't care what they say, she will be all right! There were complications—something no one had foreseen. Just at the last we very nearly—lost her; but she will be all right."

Then, after another aeon, the door opened. It was the English doctor—the man with the accent. He threw one significant glance at Connie and laid his hand gently on Don's shoulder.

"She needs you, old man," he said—just that—but Don knew, and Constance knew, what he was thinking; and Connie still held Don's hand when he crossed the threshold of that quiet room.

He stood there looking down on Nora, a Nora as white as the bed on which she lay—as white as marble. Her eyes were closed. Don could not see her breathe. He wondered . . . And then the doctor spoke, softly: "I'd take her hand, my dear fellow, if I were you."

His voice, despite the accent which had sounded so la-de-da an hour before, was very kind. And because no one had thought to bring a chair, Don dropped to his knees beside the bed and took that white, strangely transparent hand into his own. He had forgotten the nurses, the doctors, and Constance Venable. He said (so Connie told him later), "Come back, Nora. I can't go on without you. Come back, dearest . . ."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Procrustean Act Doubles Oil Supply; Research Is Credited for Big Increase

Most boys and girls have read in the old Greek myths about Procrustes, who welcomed travelers at his home in a lonely spot beside the road. Procrustes had only one bed, but he always made his wayfarers fit the bed. If they were too long, he chopped off their feet. If they were too short he stretched them on a rack. Finally, he was slain by Theseus.

Saucer-eyed as are youngsters reading the exploits of Procrustes, even grown-ups blink in amazement at the achievements of chemists in the petroleum industry in stretching, shrinking and reshaping petroleum molecules. Nature has given this country a bountiful supply of crude oil, but some of the oil molecules are too large and some too small to fit the requirements for gasoline in modern high-compression motors.

Petroleum chemists have discovered effective methods to break down the fat molecules into smaller ones. Chemists also are able by other methods to rebuild molecules to a desired size and composition.

What this juggling means to the average person is just this: if the petroleum chemists were unable to perform a Procrustean act, an addi-

tional 1,000,000,000 barrels of oil would have to be brought to the surface every year to meet the gasoline demand of the 25,000,000 motorists in the United States. Chemical research in the oil industry has had the practical effect, by reducing the amount of crude oil needed, of doubling the oil reserves of the United States. Without these chemical achievements of the petroleum scientists, the price of gasoline would be beyond the means of millions of families.

Yellow-Bellied Sea Snake
Though the yellow-bellied sea snake may not be ferocious-looking, it is nothing to get gay with, according to a writer in the Washington Post. A member of the dreaded cobra clan, it is among the most deadly of poisonous reptiles. In captivity it is particularly dangerous, becoming sullen and striking at everyone. It is the only poisonous sea snake found in the waters around America, although there are 49 other species just as deadly, elsewhere. As the name indicates, this slender snake is a brilliant yellow underneath, though its top side is black. It has no gills, must come to the surface to breathe. It is sometimes caught in fishing nets.

Winners in Cake Recipe Contest



Some of the Prize-Winning Cakes Baked in the Experimental Kitchen Laboratory of C. Houston Goudiss.

THE home economists on the staff of the Experimental Kitchen Laboratory, maintained in New York City by C. Houston Goudiss, who conducts our "WHAT TO EAT AND WHY" series, have reached their decision concerning the prize winners in the recent Cake Recipe Contest. Winners have already been notified and have received their checks.

The first prize of \$25.00 went to Mrs. D. F. Kelly, 1004 Charles St., Whitewater, Wis.

Second Prize Winners.
The five second prizes were awarded to Mrs. H. Harshbarger of 2427 Fifth Ave., Altoona, Pa.; R. A. Williams, 12075 Rosemary Ave., Detroit, Mich.; Mrs. C. A. Burns, Box 788, Oakland, Miss.; Miss Sadie Cunningham, Avonmore, Pa.; and Mrs. Laura Meyer, 107 Pleasant St., Plymouth, Wis.

Third Prize Winners.
Mrs. T. H. Fjone, Flaxville, Mont.; Mrs. Lester Ralston, 127 South Judd St., Sioux City, Iowa; Mrs. Harry A. Kramer, 16 Marin Road, Manor, Calif.; Mrs. F. D. McDonald, Route 1, Amherst, Texas; Vera Tygar, Commodore, Pa.; Mrs. George Ahlborn, R. D. No. 1, Mt. Pleasant, Pa.; Mrs. B. A. Robinson, Box 578, Emmett, Idaho; Jean Guthrie, 4712 Campbell St., Kansas City, Mo.; Mrs. Wal-

ter Richter, Bonduel, Wis.; Mrs. P. C. Blakely, Alden, Mich.

Honorable Mention.
Emogene Williams, Damon, Texas; Mrs. Simon Moen, Norma, N. D.; Mrs. Dick Collins, Masonville, Iowa; Mrs. B. F. Herman, Box 1118, Crosby, Miss.; Mrs. Paul Lorenz, P. O. Box 225, Strathmore, Calif.; Mrs. S. S. Arantz, Simpson, Nev.; Mrs. Vida Hilger, Box 257, Rockland, Mich.; Mrs. Grace H. Peterson, Box 335, Amherst, Wis.; Mrs. Cecil Skinner, Bedford, Wyo.; Mrs. Joe Furnace, 317 West Twentieth St., South Sioux City, Neb.

Magnificent Cakes Entered.
The judges report that they have never seen a finer collection of cakes assembled at one time. Because almost all the cakes were so exceptionally good, it was extremely difficult to choose the winners. But a most careful scoring system was used, and the cakes were checked for general appearance, including shape, size and crust, both color and character; flavor, including odor and taste; lightness; crumb, including texture, rated as to its fineness, tenderness, moistness and elasticity, color and grain.

C. Houston Goudiss has said that he regrets that every woman who entered the contest could not win a prize. He offers his congratulations to the winners and his thanks to the many other homemakers who helped to make this Cake Contest such a splendid success.



Uncle Phil Says:

That's Rehabilitation
Young men who are bad are usually so because they want to be bad. You've got to change their point of view.

The greatest agencies of moral reform are those that invite you and do not seek to drive you. You may admire those who are brilliantly sarcastic, but you can't love them.

Try It on Crackpots
From the first, laughter has shattered thrones and demagogues.

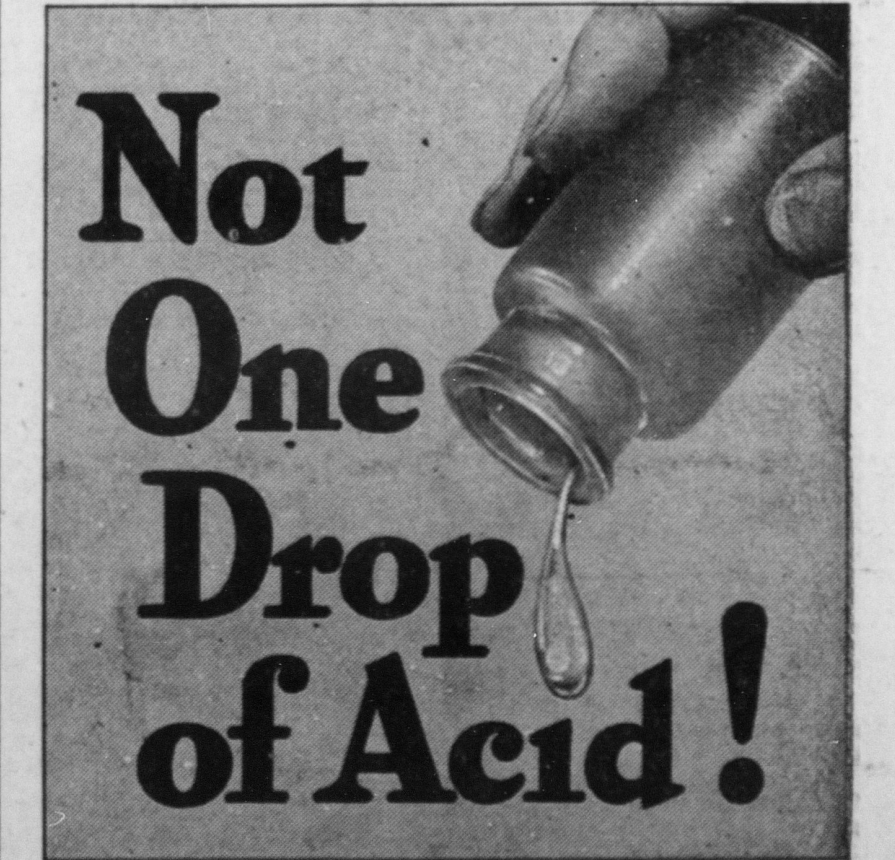
When you give your "moral support" you should be vocal about it. Silent moral support is worthless.

DO YOU KNOW HOW TO Balance Your Diet?

This Free Chart Makes It Simple as A-B-C
Helps to Safeguard Health

Planning a balanced diet will cease to be a puzzle if you send for the Homemaker's Chart for Checking Nutritional Balance, offered, free, by C. Houston Goudiss. It lists the foods and the standard amounts that should be included in the daily diet, and includes skeleton menus for breakfast, dinner and lunch or supper, to guide you in selecting the proper foods in each classification.

A postcard is sufficient to bring you this valuable aid to good menu planning. Just ask for the Nutrition Chart. Address: C. Houston Goudiss, 6 East 59th Street, New York City.



QUAKER STATE has accomplished a scientific "miracle" . . . produced from the finest Pennsylvania crude oil a motor oil so pure that the common ailments of sludge, carbon and corrosion are wholly overcome. Four great, modern refineries equipped with every scientific aid are at the service of the motoring public . . . deliver to you Acid-Free Quaker State which makes your car run better, last longer. Retail price, 35¢ a quart. Quaker State Oil Refining Corp., Oil City, Penna.

