

SHINING PALACE

By CHRISTINE WHITING PARMENTER

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CHAPTER XI—Continued

Nora laughed, and Jim Perkins, finding his voice at last, exploded: "Well, I'll tell the world you can play, Mis' Mason! I never heard nothin' like it except over the radio; and if you ask me, you've got that feller named Hoffmann beat to a frazzle!"

Leonora arose from the packing box to acknowledge his honest tribute with a curtsy; while Don suggested: "Give them some more, Nora, before they leave," and for twenty minutes Nora played to an appreciative audience as any artist could desire. Indeed, the Portland men would accept only the minutest payment for their services.

"It wa'n't nothin'," declared the older man as they arose to go. "Nothin' at all; and the music was pay enough anyhow. Wasn't it, Joe?"

"Joe," still dazed, assented with a mute nod. They departed munching Nora's molasses cookies, and Don told her (when Tom Littlefield had returned to the box stall which he was converting into the north end of a "banquet hall"), with "their souls refreshed."

And next morning, as if Fate were really trying to make up for past unkindnesses, Don received a note from the editor of an American weekly, to whom he had sent one of his "Letters from Cape Town." The article, it seemed, had filled a long-felt want. Check for American magazine rights was "herewith enclosed," and they would be glad to run the entire series during the coming year.

The check, compared with those received from England for the same material, was almost dazzling; and they both appeared to go a little mad. Nora rushed to the piano, while Don, to the exceeding joy of his small sons, proceeded to dance the Highland Fling.

When the music ceased and he dropped breathlessly into the red lacquer chair, Tom Littlefield, who had arrived during the commotion, inquired if he should call the doctor, "or are you comin' out o' that con- dition fit all right alone?"

In answer Don tossed him the incredible check.

"That's yours, Mr. Littlefield. You can blame that innocent strip of paper for this vaudeville act of mine which was put on merely to celebrate the fact that, for the time being, anyhow, the dark cloud of financial worry has vanished from the horizon. We're sane again now, and I'll get back to the shingling if that's what you want."

Not until the last possible moment did they leave the place. Never had they left any place with such regret. The weather had been almost miraculously perfect for that time of year, a fall long remembered by the natives. Tom Littlefield, possessed of minute directions from Leonora, planned to go near with the work when other jobs were scarce.

"It'll be a real life-saver to me, Mis' Mason," he assured her. "There ain't much doin' here come wintertime, and I get restless. I'll be more'n glad to keep an eye on the place and do a day's work now and then; and when you come back next spring things'll be ship-shape. I declare, I—I'm downright sorry to see you go."

"And I'd give almost anything to stay, Mr. Littlefield," Nora confessed. "After all, there's no place like home, is there?—and I've never had one of my own before. Not for worlds would I have Mr. Mason suspect it, but I don't mind owning up to you that I dread to leave."

She did; yet a happy winter with Constance Venable (who had sold the ill-fated island where Carl met his death, and for financial reasons was staying abroad indefinitely) lay just ahead. Things were going extremely well when they returned to Maine for another summer; and as a complete surprise Nora discovered not only running water in her box stall kitchen, but a small and shining bathroom, the result of an intrigue between her husband and the old Maine builder.

Not until that summer did she hint to her father of this permanent abiding place. Going to the beautiful antique desk which they had purchased of "our egg lady," as the boys called her ("Because," the woman explained when Don told her honestly that it was worth much more than he could give, "them antique dealers is makin' my life miserable anyhow, and Mis' Mason never forgets to ask after my sick boy")—going to that desk Nora constructed the postal card that was to play an important part in her life some three years later. Glancing over her shoulder as she finished it, Don smiled a bit sadly at what he feared was merely another disappointment.

It was, he observed, a fantastic postal. First came the verse from which the old notary had quoted the day they signed the deeds. Below this Nora had written her address, followed by: "If taxi is un-

available, take trolley car to end of line and proceed as follows," after which was a tiny map drawn in red ink.

She said, turning to look up at Don: "That verse about the shingling palace is an invitation, and if it arrives when Dad's in a relenting mood, he may accept it."

Don said nothing. It sometimes troubled him that in all these years Nora had never lost hold of the conviction that her father would reach a moment of surrender. Personally, Don didn't believe it, not after the old man's silence when informed of the arrival of his namesake, James Lambert Mason. It was hard for Don to forgive that silence when he recalled how, spent with the hours of fear and anguish, Nora had looked up at him from her narrow berth on that storm-tossed ship, to say: "If—if it's only a boy, dear, so we can name him for Father, I sha'n't mind—anything. It—it will bring us together."

Well, mused Don, turning away from his wife's eyes, it was a boy, and it had not brought them one inch nearer. Jimsy was more than three years old, and his grandfather had not expressed the slightest interest in his existence. It wasn't



"There's our theater ahead now."

in Don to comprehend how anyone could be so stubbornly resentful—so unkind. Impatient at the situation he once said as much, and Nora answered:

"It's not just that, Don. You see, he loved my mother above anything on earth, yet she hurt him un- speakably. And, though it wasn't my fault, perhaps, I hurt him, too. I think he doesn't dare let me get near him any more. Don't you understand? He's afraid of being hurt again."

So she mailed her postal, hoped for a time, and then decided that the hour of relenting had not come. But despite this disappointment Nora was very happy that summer. Don was always glad to remember how happy she had been. As the months passed, her new home became almost as perfect as she dreamed it could be; and even Tom Littlefield admitted that the "ball room" was not too big.

"And it's cozy, isn't it?" prodded Leonora, determined to make the old carpenter give in.

"O, it's cozy enough," he assented, albeit grudgingly; "but I still think, if you was to ask me, Mis' Mason, that it's all out o' proportion to the size o' the kitchen."

"But we don't live in the kitchen," Nora retorted.

"And I ain't ever heard o' anybody livin' in a ball room, either," snapped the old man.

He was a frequent caller, as was the notary at the Port. The latter had a standing invitation to Sunday dinner, which was quite as likely to be served on the beach as in the banquet hall. Afterwards he would find his way into the big living room and browse among the books, sometimes reading aloud from his beloved poets to Nora, sometimes reading from "Peter Rabbit" to the boys.

"He's as good as a grandfather," said Don one Sunday afternoon when he found the old man with both children in his lap; and then wished he hadn't spoken because Nora's face clouded at the words.

The summer drifted by. September came, and with it the chance Don was hoping for, something he had kept secret from his wife fearing to cause her disappointment should it not work out. For Nora had hinted to the little boys that Santa Claus might possibly bring them a "baby sister," and Don was determined that their mother should not be dragged to Europe if such a step could be avoided. He knew that the "Letters from Cape Town" had proved even more popular than the American editor expected.

There was no reason to think he would not be amenable to the suggestion that there was a vast amount of interesting material on their own West. Don planned a series of articles called "Seeing America First," submitted the idea, and waited impatiently for the verdict.

Not knowing that the great man was away on a vacation, the letter seemed long in coming; but it brought good news. The editor considered this plan "most interesting," and requested that Don stop off in Chicago on the way West to consult a personal friend of his who had been over the ground recently and might give him some valuable data. . . . And would he plan so that the first article could be run in February?

Nora wept with relief when she heard the news—Nora, who so seldom gave way to tears.

"I've been dreading so awfully to start out again," she told him, "but this is different. If, as you say, we can stay at San Diego until after New Year's, everything will be easy. I can settle you somewhere, and then go to a hospital for the event. And next spring we can come home for a long summer. Don't mind my crying, Don. It—it's only the heavenly relief." "You poor dear nomad!" said Don tenderly. And then added: "If all goes well, darling, we'll install a furnace here next summer so we can stay as late as you want to in the fall."

"I believe," smiled Nora, winking away the last of her foolish tears, "I believe you've discovered the advantages of a home yourself, Don!"

CHAPTER XII

They reached Chicago on a bleak November morning. Wind was blowing across Lake Michigan in wintry gusts, and the weather man predicted snow. It came, a blizzard out of the north. For two days they were storm-bound in a boarding house run by an old nurse of Constance Venable's—one of the many whom Carl's unfeeling generosity had helped.

On the third afternoon when the city was digging out of snow drifts and the sun was making a half-hearted effort to show its face, their hostess said: "Why don't you two go for a little walk? I'll look after the children. I'd really like to; and a breath of outdoor air will do you good."

"Come on," said Don, brightening at the prospect of some activity. "If you get tired, Nora, we'll drop in at a movie for an hour."

"That's right," urged the woman, glad to be of service to these friends of her beloved Venables. "You'll find a theater three blocks down. It's a cheap place, opened only a week ago; but it'll do to get warm in."

"Sure!" agreed Don, "and a lurid picture won't hurt old folks like us!" The wind sprang up again as they started out; and the sun, discouraged, retired behind a cloud.

"I guess three blocks'll be about enough!" Don laughed as they ducked their heads against the weather. "Those Italian winters have spoiled us, Nora; but I hear we're liable to fry in Arizona. That's one place I haven't been, my dear, and I'm crazy to see it. There's our theater ahead now. Looks cheap all right. I bet the snow's packed solid behind that false front roof. There's weight to this snow, Nora. I hope—"

What Don hoped was lost in a gust of wind that fairly blew them into the lobby of the theater.

Smart Crow Often Has to Fight Other Birds, but He Always Calls for Help

The natural enemy of the crow is the hawk. Blackbirds, bluebirds, swallows, and at times robins, will fight them viciously. However, the crow is smart—smarter than most of the feathered world—in that he will fight only when backed by a company of his kind. Virtually all other birds and animals hunt alone. The crow will feed alone, but when trouble arises he begins calling for help and a whole platoon of his companions is soon on the scene to help. Because of these gang methods, however, the crow furnishes excellent sport for the shooter because he is easily decoyed.

Anyone armed with a crow call can have excellent sport calling and shooting the black robbers. There are several ways in which to hunt them, advises a writer in the Chicago Daily News.

A stuffed or live hawk or owl is an excellent decoy. The decoy should be placed in the open and the gunner should hide in near-by woods. Then he should blow his crow call lustily. He soon is rewarded by the approach of crows.

Another method is to locate a roost, where the crows come in by the thousands for the night. This

"Perhaps we'd better go right back," gasped Nora. "The wind is certainly getting worse. It wouldn't surprise me if it stormed again."

"Me, either; but you're completely out of breath, dear. Let's get inside and rest for a few minutes. It'll be easier going home with the wind at our backs, you know. We can sit in the last row, Nora, and slip out any time we're bored. You need to rest after that fight with the elements."

This was sane logic, so they went inside.

"Looks as if all the kiddies of the neighborhood had come in out of the storm," Don whispered as their eyes grew accustomed to the dimness. "Why didn't we think to bring the boys?"

Nora smiled. Don always regretted his sons' absence when other children were in evidence. She said, softly: "They're better off where they are. There's such a crowd, and the air is terrible. Why!—Why what—"

Her voice rose a little. Her head lifted. Later Nora was to remember that she had thought herself ill because the whole building seemed to tremble and the roof looked as if it were crumbling up, slowly. The most curious sensation, a sort of chill, ran over her—all in a second, of course, for Don was already on his feet, holding her wrist in a grip that tortured. Just as they reached the lobby the crash came. And then a cry went up behind them—a cry that was to ring in Nora's ears for months. It sounded, she thought, like an awful and terrifying wave of protest from a single throat. . . .

They were in the street. . . . Already a throng of morbid onlookers had gathered. People (Oh, fortunate people!) were pouring out of the doomed theater. . . . Policemen, dozens of them, it seemed to Nora, sprang up like magic. . . . Firemen were there, trying to rope off space. . . . pushing them back.

It was then that Don, who had been stunned into a horrified silence, roused himself with a convulsive shudder. He turned to Nora—looked down into her upturned face—stared into it so curiously that she grasped his arm, crying: "Oh, thank God we are safe, Don!" And still he looked at her. . . . An ambulance gong sounded. . . . Somewhere beyond the rope a woman screamed. . . . A man pushed by them, wild-eyed, disheveled. . . . Above the tumult a child's terrified voice cried out: "Mother! Where's my mother?"

Don said, still staring down with that extraordinary gravity: "But I must go back, Nora. Those children. . . . They might be ours. . . . I've got to help. . . . You must go home now, darling. Go home to the little boys. They need you. . . . Don't you see that—that I have got to help?" Before she could say one word, he stooped—kissed her—was gone, eluding the quick grasp of a fireman—unheeding the shout of protest from another. Those feet, those buoyant feet which had borne Don so joyously on his adventures, were bearing him now on still another, bearing him swiftly, swiftly, lest they falter. . . .

Nora was standing there three hours later when they brought him out. Three hours of horror—three hours of numbing cold—three hours of torment. He was the last to come, his broken body carried tenderly by two firemen. Nora, close to the ropes, cried out at sight of him: "Don! Dearest! I'm waiting for you. I—I am here, Don!" (TO BE CONTINUED)

A Play Outfit; a Basic Dress



dusty pastel shade; calico, percale and pique are good, too. Be sure to trim it with ricrac.

Dress With Bodice Detailing.

Here's a design that brings a breath of fall smartness in the bosom detailing that you'll see in expensive models this coming season. Also in the Victorian sleeves, high at the shoulders and fitted to the arm below. The straight panel in the back, the gathers at the waistline in front, give you a lovely figure-line. Although it's so distinguished looking and subtly detailed, this dress is easy to make. Just six steps in the detailed sew chart. Make it now of silk crepe, linen or georgette. Later in sheer wool, satin or velvet.

The Patterns.

1557 is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20. Size 14 requires 5 1/2 yards of 35-inch material. 10 yards of ricrac braid to trim. 1482 is designed for sizes 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44. Size 34 requires 4 1/2 yards of 39-inch material with long sleeves; 4 1/4 yards of 39-inch material for short sleeves.

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ASK ME ANOTHER

A Quiz With Answers Offering Information on Various Subjects

The Questions

1. In what lake does the Mississippi river have its rise?
2. Who were the Druids?
3. Who was the author of this quotation: "America never lost a war and never won a conference"?
4. What is a papal bull?
5. What is the largest city south of the equator?
6. What is the most traveled highway in the United States?
7. Why was the state of Florida given that name?
8. What percentage of motion picture films shown all over the world is made in the United States?

The Answers

1. Lake Itasca in Minnesota.
2. Priests of the religion of the ancient inhabitants of Britain, Gaul and Germany.
3. Will Rogers.
4. An edict of the pope.
5. Buenos Aires, Argentina.
6. The American Automobile association says that U. S. Highway

No. 1 in the vicinity of New York City has the heaviest traffic.

7. It was discovered on Easter Sunday—in Spanish, Pascua Florida, the Feast of Flowers.

8. A survey of the department of commerce shows that American motion pictures constitute 70 per cent of the showings in all foreign markets.

Condemn Your Faults

Many men are angry with them that tell them of their faults, when they should be angry only with the faults that are told them.—Venning.



WHAT'S ALL THIS TALK ABOUT A PURE OIL!

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