

# SHINING PALACE

By CHRISTINE WHITING PARMENTER

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## CHAPTER XII—Continued

Don heard! Nora knew that he heard. His head turned a little. Something that tried valiantly to be a smile, flickered for one brave moment across his face. . . . A gong sounded. . . . A voice: "This way, Bill. Room for another here. . . ."

The ambulance swallowed him while Leonora struggled to get near. . . . swallowed him. . . . bore him away. . . .

She reached out, trembling from head to foot. She touched the wet arm of a fireman.

"Please, can you tell me—is—is he. . . ."

The man wheeled—faced her.

"You mean that fellow we just brought out, lady? He's hurt bad. Stayed under the balcony for hours tryin' to free a child that was pinned down. Time and again he was told to quit—that any minute the balcony was due to fall—but he just stayed there—kept on workin'. And not five seconds after he passed the kid to safety the thing collapsed. Tough, ain't it? It took three of us an hour to uncover him. Say! I take off my hat to a guy like him! I never saw—My God, lady! is—is he anything to you?"

"He—he is my husband," said Nora proudly; and then, suddenly conscious of pain that rent and tore her, yet not forgetting the dear burden that she carried, sank gently down into the drifted snow.

On an October evening nearly three years later, James Lambert went slowly up the stairs to a room that Martha Berry called "my parlor." It was a pleasant room with crisp white ruffled curtains at the windows, and a scarlet square covering its center table; a room as prim and orderly as Martha herself, yet with a home-like quality about it too.

It was here that both Ned and Nora had brought their childhood troubles to be smoothed away by Martha's gentle hand. It was here (though he did not suspect the fact) that James Lambert, during the years of Nora's absence, had brought his.

This was Martha's birthday. James never forgot the date, partly because it was Ned's birthday too, and years ago they had celebrated the event together; partly because it was his habit to remember the anniversaries which most men forget. Martha was not quite well, and the fact troubled him. She had been the prop and stay of his household for so many years. She had mothered his children, and, James admitted with a little smile, mothered himself as well. They must take care that nothing saddened this faithful woman as she grew old.

The door to Martha's parlor stood wide open. She was expecting him. A fire burned in the small coal grate, and his accustomed chair was waiting by the hearth. Martha was waiting too. Her work basket and copies of a church weekly which usually occupied the center table, had been put away to make room for a display of birthday gifts; a vase of roses from Corinne and Ned; a cake, her name in fancy pink frosting on the top; a gilt basket filled with stuffed dates; gray knitted bedshoes; gloves; two books, and a lace-edged handkerchief, obviously yellowed from being laid away.

James, glancing at the table, knew that he was expected to exclaim and admire. When it came to birthdays Martha was something of a child. Now, though she looked up with her customary smile of greeting, he saw the unmistakable trace of recent tears. It was a distinct shock. Never before had Martha's clear gray eyes been clouded. He said, despite his inner perturbation: "Happy birthday, Martha!" and producing a small, white package from his coat pocket, presented it.

Martha said, as she had said on every previous occasion of the same sort: "You shouldn't have done it, Mr. Lambert," and proceeded to untie the cord with the eager fingers of one who was very glad he had. Those fingers trembled as she held aloft the beautiful gold chain with its drop of flawless amethyst which was James Lambert's gift. Save for a watch which Nora had given her years before, Martha had never owned so valuable an ornament. Regarding her closely, James saw that she was thrilled; though all she said was to repeat: "You shouldn't have done it, Mr. Lambert. When can an old woman like me wear anything so fine?"

"Every day," he answered, pleased that the trinket had made her smile. "That's what it's for, Martha. And now what have we here?" He moved toward the table. "Haven't you fared even better than usual?"

"I do not know what passed between you and Miss Nora before she went away. I do not know what bitter things you may both have said. I do not want to know. But we are getting old, Mr. Lambert, you and I; and old age is a lonely time, a sad time, unless one can look back over the years and say: 'I have done my best.' If you will remember, all Miss Nora asked was to marry the man she loved; and—There!" broke off Martha in confusion. "I did not intend to preach a sermon, to you of all people! But these things have lain heavy on my heart for years, Mr. Lambert, and I had to speak. If I have of-

Clara and Isabel. Now I've more time to myself I enjoy reading. Cook made the cake, as usual; and the other girls gave me the bedshoes and that handsome basket of stuffed dates. Help yourself, Mr. Lambert. A stuffed date ought not to hurt anyone. The gloves came from my niece Clara's husband, and. . . ."

Martha paused. James, bending above the table, had lifted the handkerchief. There followed a silence before the woman said, gently, her voice trembling a little: "The handkerchief is from Miss Nora, Mr. Lambert. It came this morning."

If a bomb had exploded in Martha's parlor, James Lambert wouldn't have been more startled. He wheeled about, exclaiming in astonishment: "Nora! You say this handkerchief came from Nora?"

Martha nodded. "Sit down, Mr. Lambert. Though it may not be my place to speak of it, you're all of a tremble. Miss Nora has never forgotten old Martha's birthday—bless her loyal heart!—though in other years, since

that the loyal woman had ever dealt him. James did not speak, and after a moment she continued: "Yes, every year. No matter where she happened to be living, my birthday handkerchief has arrived on time. They have come from many countries, Mr. Lambert—Italy, England, Germany, even South Africa, if you'll believe it! Beautiful pieces of linen, all of them; but never an address so I could write and thank her. Note that, please. It was as if she felt you would not like me to write, sir—that if you wished her to hear news of us all you would write yourself. That's loyalty, isn't it? That's little Miss Nora! But last year. . . ."

Martha paused so long that James Lambert stirred uneasily, and she said: "Maybe you noticed that I'd been crying a bit when you came in, sir? It was about Miss Nora. Something tells me that ill luck has befallen her and hers. It was a year ago that I began to worry. My handkerchief came, Mr. Lambert, but it was not a new one. It was one of a half dozen Mrs. Ned gave her one Christmas, and that I'd admired. I remembered distinctly the butterflies embroidered in all four corners. It had been nicely laundered; but I could not help wondering if Miss Nora was, maybe, too poor to buy one; and then I decided she might have been where she could not shop, so had sent one of her own. I tried to put the matter out of my mind, and now, you see, I wish that I had not."

Martha lifted Nora's birthday remembrance that had arrived that day, shook out its delicate folds and spread it across her lap. "Do you see, Mr. Lambert, this is another that she had saved, because it was so handsome, I suppose. There near the center is a tiny place which has been mended. And that's not all, sir. It is quite yellow from being laid away—discolored. She had no time even to bleach it! That is why I was crying a little, Mr. Lambert. Don't you see, Miss Nora would never have sent old Martha a mended handkerchief if she could have bought a new one. And not to launder it! She may be sick, Mr. Lambert. I feel in my bones that things are wrong with her; while I, who would give my life for the poor lamb, and you, the only father she ever knew, are warm and comfortable, surrounded with every luxury."

There was a silence before the old woman continued, her voice trembling: "That is not right, Mr. Lambert. It is not Christian. Do not tell me that I am forgetting my place to say so. I know it. I have been your servant for more than half my life, sir; but I have been your friend as well; and you, the good Lords knows, have been a friend to me. There is no man in the world that I admire as I admire you, sir; but that does not blind me to your faults. Why should I? I have seen you show forgiveness that was almost heavenly; but you can be stubborn—too stubborn for your own good or the good of those that love you."

"I do not know what passed between you and Miss Nora before she went away. I do not know what bitter things you may both have said. I do not want to know. But we are getting old, Mr. Lambert, you and I; and old age is a lonely time, a sad time, unless one can look back over the years and say: 'I have done my best.' If you will remember, all Miss Nora asked was to marry the man she loved; and—There!" broke off Martha in confusion. "I did not intend to preach a sermon, to you of all people! But these things have lain heavy on my heart for years, Mr. Lambert, and I had to speak. If I have of-

—since she went away, sir, I have not mentioned her gift for fear of hurting you."

The woman arose, went into her small bedroom, and returning with a package wrapped carefully in tissue paper, sat down once more and resumed her narrative.

"You see, sir, it happened this way: When Miss Nora was only a wee girl she asked what I would like her to give me for a birthday present. I said, 'Get me a nice handkerchief, child, one that's a bit fancy for all mine are plain and when I take tea at the minister's next week I must dress up.' I said it in fun, you know—as a sort of joke; but the child got one of my maids to take her to the five and ten cent store, Mr. Lambert, and she bought me a handkerchief—a fancy one as I believe you will agree. I have it here."

Martha had been slowly untying the tissue-wrapped package. It contained, James saw, a pile of neatly folded handkerchiefs. From the top she lifted one with a bright pink border. She spread it out. Something supposed to be a pansy embroidered in garish shades of red and purple, adorned each corner. James Lambert stared at it; but as he remained silent the woman said: "Her taste improved as she grew older."

"Which was indeed fortunate," reported James, surprised, even in that tense moment, to find his long dormant sense of humor still alive.

"So every year, Mr. Lambert, no matter how fine a gift Miss Nora gave me, there was always a birthday handkerchief as well. To tell the truth, nice handkerchiefs are a sort of weakness with me, and I think she knew it. Nice handkerchiefs and nice aprons. I never could abide the sort of aprons that (if you'll excuse my saying so) Mrs. Ned's maids are content to wear. Except during the years of war, when such extravagance would have been shameless, my own were linen."

Martha was spreading out a blue-edged square. "This came when she was only ten, Mr. Lambert—the year she and Mr. Ned gave me the gold brooch. Notice the pretty border, sir, as refined as can be; though later she got them all white which was more suitable, except this lavender one she brought from Europe. Just look at the quality! It is sheer enough for a queen—so delicate that I have never presumed to use it; but—"

"And you say," broke in James Lambert as if rousing suddenly, "you tell me that Nora has continued since her marriage, to remember you?"

"Did you think she would forget?" It was the nearest to a reproof

fended, I can only beg your pardon."

James Lambert arose slowly. He did not smile, but rested a gentle hand upon her shoulder for a moment.

"You are a good friend, Martha. You could not offend me if you tried. You have merely shown me the truth that, down underneath, I have known for a long time." He glanced at his watch. "Ned will be here to see you in a few moments, but—but I must be going down. There are things to— to think about. . . ."

CHAPTER XIII

James was still deep in thought when, an hour later, his son came down from the birthday visit with old Martha. In fact, Ned found his father so noncommittal that he, too, lapsed into silence and took up a book. But he did not read. Not only had he something on his mind, but he was observing with genuine concern those lines of care and worry in the older man's familiar visage.

Ten years, and troubles with a growing son had made Ned Lambert more tolerant of others. Now, coming to a decision, he asked abruptly: "Dad, do you hear from Nora these days?"

James started, because Ned seemed to have read his thoughts. "Not a line for nearly three years, son."

"You're worried?" His father nodded. "I can't help wondering if they're in difficulties; and tonight Martha—"

He stopped, not wishing to go further; and Ned moved to a window, looking into the dark night as if uncertain about something. It was James who spoke.

"Look here, son. I think you ought to know that when your sister went away I didn't change my will as I intended. Except for an extra two hundred thousand and the business, which goes to you, the estate is divided evenly, as it was then. There are bequests to servants, of course; and to the men who've been with us longest at the office, besides something for Nora's boys; but the bulk of the property goes to you and—and your sister. When she left home I was too upset to think about such things. Later I let the matter drift. Now—well, if you feel that it's unjust to you and yours—"

"Why should I?" Ned turned—sat down beside his father on theavenport. "It's your money, Dad. Do as you please with it. I've got enough of my own—enough to have pretty nearly ruined my own boy, as you know. We'll both be happier, you and I, if we feel that Nora is provided for."

"You mean that?" questioned James, a trifle puzzled. Ned smiled.

"Of course I mean it! Why in the world shouldn't I? I'll admit that I used to be jealous of Nora when I was a kid; and after I understood about things I was sometimes cad enough to feel ashamed of her. I think she knew it, and despised me a little. But I realize now that you seemed every bit as near to her as you did to me, and I shouldn't want you to hurt her in any way. Where was she, Father, when you last heard?"

James cleared his throat, not in anger as he used to do in the old days, but because of a sudden rush of feeling. Ned's words had brought him immeasurable relief.

"They were in Chicago, on their way West. Her husband was planning to write a series of articles like those he did about South Africa. You read 'em, didn't you?"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Inhabitants of South America Number More Than 75,000,000; Brazil Is Large

Few North Americans realize that there are more than 75,000,000 inhabitants in South America; that Brazil is 200,000 square miles larger than the United States; that Argentina is as large as all the states east of the Mississippi; that Rio de Janeiro is among the most beautiful cities in the world; that the Parana river discharges double the quantity of water of the Mississippi; that gold and diamonds abound in Brazil; that the Chaco forest is worth \$10,000,000,000.

That the Amazon and its tributaries constitute the greatest water system on earth; that ocean steamships sail 2,000 miles into the country; that Hold cascade of Herval has a sheer drop of 400 feet; that the ruins of the Incas antedate those of Babylon; that the nuts of the tagua palm supply buttons for the universe; that the Iguazu falls are higher and wider than Niagara; that a million square miles of

territory there still await the eye of the explorer. And so on—in this continent where everything is on a huge and lavish plan and but a fraction of the natural wealth has been developed.

Down that way is the beautiful constellation of the Southern hemisphere, the Southern Cross, extolled for centuries in poetry and prose, and beloved by all sailors who ride the waters that lead in the direction of the South pole.

The Southern Cross is situated above the Antarctic circle, and for this reason is never visible in northern latitudes. It consists of four bright stars, to which fancy, aided by Christian associations, gives the cruciform shape.

How Animals Spend Winter Most animals run about, or fly, during the winter, but others find a place to spend weeks or months in sleeping. Frogs take a long rest after the weather grows cold. They go to the bottoms of ponds and burrow deeply into the mud. Some frogs live to the age of ten or twelve years.

## Two Pretty Frocks, Both Easy to Make



IF YOU'RE one of those women who so often say "Dear me, I wish I could sew!", then by all means try your hand on these smart designs, and like many, many others, just as inexperienced as you are, you'll find that you can sew, and enjoy it! Our patterns include detailed sew charts that show you just what to do, step by step.

The Woman's Dress. Here we have a diagram design, which means you can finish it successfully in a few hours. And you'll find it one of the most becoming and comfortable you ever wore around the house. The short sleeves are slashed, which makes them easier to work in, and prettier to look at. Sleeves, neckline and pointed closing are trimmed with ricrac. Make this dress of gingham, seersucker, percale or calico.

The Little Girl's Dress. This dress will make your small daughter look even more adorable, with its high, snug waist, square neck, puff sleeves and full skirt. You'll probably want to make her half a dozen dresses just like this! And she'll certainly beg for a little sweetheart apron. For the dress, choose dimity, dotted Swiss, gingham or percale. For the apron, organdy, dimity or lawn.

No. 1559 is designed for sizes 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46 and 48. Size 36 requires 4 1/2 yards of 35-inch material; 2 1/2 yards of ricrac to trim as pictured.

No. 1468 is designed for sizes 2, 4, 6 and 8 years. Size 4 requires 1 1/2 yards of 35-inch material for the dress; 3/4 yard for the apron. Six yards of ribbon or braid to trim dress; 1 yard for belt. Two and one-half yards of ruffling to trim apron.

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## How Women in Their 40's Can Attract Men

Here's good advice for a woman during her change (usually from 38 to 42), who fears she'll lose her appeal to men, who worries about hot flashes, loss of pep, dizzy spells, upset nerves and moody spells. Get more fresh air, 8 hrs. sleep and if you need a good general system tonic take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, made especially for women. It helps Nature build up physical resistance, thus helps give more vitality to enjoy life and assist calming jittery nerves and dizziness symptoms that often accompany change of life. WELL WORTH TRYING!

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## Sentinels of Health

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When the kidneys fail to function as Nature intended, there is retention of waste that may cause body-wide distress. One may suffer sagging backache, persistent headache, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes—feel tired, nervous, all worn out.

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