

There COMES a MOMENT

By ELINOR MAXWELL

© ARCADIA HOUSE PUBLICATIONS—WNU SERVICE

CHAPTER XV—Continued

There was something mysterious about the whole thing. Even the friends who had come to condole seemed strangely quiet on the subject of Jim Loring's sudden death, and as the hours wore on, Mary grew more and more apprehensive. His going was spoken about as "tragic," "a great loss to Hawkinsville," and "terrible for the family"—but the spirit of evasion as to how his death had come about was always there.

"Ellen," she began that night in the privacy of their room "was dad's death really an accident?"

Silence—a long silence, which answered her better than any words could have done.

"Ellen! Was it—did he—?"

Ellen stifled a sob. "Yes, Mary. Dad—took his own life."

"Oh, my God! I was afraid he had! Something told me at the time your message came, and then, today, when I simply couldn't get to see anybody alone, I began to feel sure . . ."

"Mother found him in the garage, Mary," Ellen went on, "the doors closed, the ignition turned on. She clings to the idea that it was an accident and, Mary, that's what the verdict was, but I know and so do you . . ."

"That it was suicide," Mary finished in a whisper. "Yes, Ellen, he was frantic about money, and he felt the only way to save his family from poverty was to take his own life, so that we might have his insurance. If only he'd waited another 24 hours, he'd have known it wasn't necessary to do such a dreadful thing! My novel's been accepted by a magazine, Ellen. They're going to pay me five thousand dollars for serial publication only. Think of it—five thousand dollars! And Dad committed suicide—in order to give his family ten thousand dollars insurance."

"Yes," Ellen replied bitterly. "Ten thousand dollars—only twice as much as you'll receive for your novel!"

"And I'm going to sell other rights. I know I shall! And I could've taken care of the family! The irony of it, Ellen! The tragedy! He gave up his life for his family's security—and it was all so needless!"

CHAPTER XVI

June came and went, but notwithstanding letters from Anthony Porter, Phil Buchanan, and Aunt Linnie, asking her to return to New York, Mary remained in Hawkinsville. Mr. Porter wrote that he was quite sure a certain well-known publishing house would shortly give her a contract for book-publication of "Storm on the Mountain," and that it would be good business for her to be on hand for that, and other things to come. Phil, by wires and letters, all slightly stilted and businesslike, expressed his desire to see her back "where she now belonged"; while Aunt Linnie said that she was lonesome, and longed for Mary to return to live with her—indeed, if she liked.

The reason for Aunt Linnie's loneliness, aside from the genuine affection she held for her niece was conveyed to Mary in a letter from Lelia. It read:

Darling: I want you to be among the very first to hear that Jim and I are going to be married again, for, had it not been for you, I mightn't have known until it was too late that he was ill and broke, and that he needed me terribly. I might have stayed indefinitely on in Jamaica, but instead, as you know, we boarded the first ship back to New York, and the very day we landed I motored out to Stamford to see him.

He was there in our little house, terribly ill and depressed, and cared for only by Anita, the housemaid; and when I opened the door and saw him lying on the lounge, thin and pale and discouraged, I knew that no matter what had happened in the past, he was my husband and that we must be together the rest of our lives.

We're going to be married next week, with only Linnie and Phil Buchanan as witnesses, and we're going to live forever in this sweet little house. Jim's still quite ill, but the doctors say that with rest and quiet and proper food, he will recover in time. I have plenty of money for us both, and, after all, practically everything I possess was given to me by him.

I've not mentioned my happiness before, my dear, because I didn't want to intrude it on your sorrow. Linnie says I've done the most sensible thing of my life, but she's just a bit upset over my giving up my New York apartment and "burying" myself in Connecticut. She's a little lonesome, I think, and eager for you to return to New York and stay with her forever. How about it, Mary? Can you do it? Can your sweet mother get along without you? Surely, with all the success that's coming your way these days, New York's the place for you to live.

But Mary, helping her mother to reconstruct her life, attempting to bring her stricken little brother back to normalcy, stayed on in the little Iowa town. And, too, Ellen and Bill Duryea had decided to marry soon, and she felt that she should do all she could to make their coming marriage as happy an affair as the circumstances would allow. They were going to live with Mrs. Loring; the wedding was, of course, to be a very quiet one; still there were

bridal things to be purchased, arrangements to be made.

Gossip was running rife concerning Christopher and Ilsa Cragg. Ilsa had gone to Reno to obtain a divorce, and report had it that she and Arty Belden would be married as soon as the decree was granted, and go to Chicago to live. Hawkinsville, unaccustomed to scandal, certainly did not want them there.

Then, at last, she saw Chris. It was a hot day, the first part of July, and she was walking down Trilby Lane after a visit to her father's grave, when suddenly she heard the sound of an automobile coming up behind her. Without even glancing around, she stepped to one side of the road to let the car go by. Instead of passing her, however, it came to a stop, and, looking up, she saw Christopher Cragg.

He jumped from the car and came toward her. "Mary! How are you? I've been to your house twice, but



He jumped from the car and came toward her.

you weren't at home either time."

"I know, Chris. I was sorry to miss you."

"Are you going home now? Can I give you a lift?"

"Yes—I was going home."

"Then, come on, my dear. I'll drive you into town."

She glanced at the car. It was not the disreputable affair in which she had ridden with him last Christmas, but, instead, a shining new model of expensive make. "You have a new car, Chris?"

Doctor Cragg smiled sardonically. "Yes—one little item that was saved from the wreck!"

Mary looked puzzled.

"The wreck of my marriage," he explained flippantly. "It was Ilsa's wedding present to me."

Bewildered by the hard cynicism in his voice, she glanced sharply up at him. They were at the side of the car now, and he placed his hand on her arm to help her get in, but, to her surprise, his touch failed to affect her as it always had in the past. It seemed but the casual touch of any man going through the usual gesture that courtesy demands. Always before, such slight contact with Chris had sent the blood tingling in her veins, had made her heart beat with a foolish haste.

He had taken his seat at the wheel now, and they were moving down Trilby Lane. At last, after all these months, they were together again! Yet, somehow or other, their reunion was disappointing; the joy she had anticipated was not there. She felt so separate from Chris, so—outside him, as though she were seeing him objectively for the first time as a person apart from her.

"I want to tell you, Mary," he said, after they had driven some distance in silence, "how very sorry I was about your father. You have my sympathy."

"Thank you, Chris, I—let's don't talk about Dad, please. I just can't seem to bear . . ."

"I know, my dear. I shan't say another word." And then "Let's talk about my marriage!" There was a tinge of bitterness in his voice. "I suppose you've been told it's on the rocks—that Ilsa's getting a divorce."

"Yes," Mary said, "I've been told."

Chris shrugged. "Nice mess, isn't it?" he inquired. "I didn't think please the lady, and—oh, well, the marriage should never have taken place. You know that as well as I do, Mary."

"No," Mary thought, "no, the marriage never should have taken place—and yet, it had! He said he loved me—but he married Ilsa. Why? Why?" The question which had been tormenting her for months simply must be answered—and answered now.

She turned and looked at Chris, but his gaze remained steadily fixed on the road ahead of him. "Then, why, Chris, why did you go on with it?" she asked in a low voice.

Chris drove on in silence. "I don't know, Mary," he replied at last.

"There just didn't seem to be any honorable way of getting out of it. I never cared for anyone except you, after the first night we met. But Ilsa and I had been engaged for some time, and I just didn't see how I could break it off. Then, too, her father's a big specialist in Chicago . . ."

"But," Mary interrupted, "what had her father to do with it?"

"Well," Chris replied, "when he heard that Ilsa and I were engaged, he promised to take me into partnership with him, providing I'd first do general work in a small town for a year or so. It was the chance of a lifetime, of course, and by taking advantage of it, I was saving myself years and years of useless plugging."

The sudden introduction of Ilsa's father into the question of this inexplorable marriage left Mary quite at sea for a moment. Then, as she began to realize what an important part Doctor Graeland—and his offer—had played, her face blazed crimson.

"So!" she thought. "This is why Chris went ahead with the marriage! Because of her father, Ilsa had something to offer, while I had only—myself. Why, he's nothing but—an opportunist! What an idiot I was not to know at the time that, had he been a real person, he'd have told Ilsa he couldn't go on with the thing! And all these months, I've thought I loved him!"

They were nearing the Cody place now, at the very outskirts of Hawkinsville, and Chris was pulling up at the side of the road. "Listen, Mary," he said, "I'm in love with you. I've always been in love with you, and I want you to marry me, darling, as soon as I'm free."

Here it was at last! Chris wanted her to be his wife. Chris had asked her to marry him. She had longed for months to be asked that question. Yet now that it had come, she felt a strange apathy towards the whole situation.

He was leaning towards her now, searching her cool young profile for his answer. "How about it, Mary?" he persisted. "You will marry me, won't you, darling?"

Mary turned and looked at him, feeling as if she were looking at a stranger; as if, indeed, she had never known this man. "No, Chris," she said slowly, and her heart was calm. "No, I can't marry you."

"But, Mary! I thought . . ."

"That I loved you, too? Well, I thought so myself, for a while, but I was terribly mistaken. I realize now that I not only did not love you—but also, Chris, that I never really knew you. Let's go back to town, Chris. I'm anxious to get home."

The young doctor put one of his hands over hers as it lay on her lap. "You aren't angry with me for speaking of this," he asked apologetically, "so soon after your—your trouble?"

Mary shook her head. "No," she replied, forcing a smile to her lips. "Not at all. I simply want to get home."

He stared at her for one puzzled moment. Then, without a word, turned on the ignition, and, with a violent jerk, started down the road.

"Thank God, that's over!" she told herself, as, in silence, they sped towards town. "Thank God, I've found him out! And to think of the months of agony that I've gone through for this man!"

"I love Phil!" she told herself in wonder. "I've loved him all the time, and I was just too dazzled by false illusions of Chris to realize it. I must get back to him at once! I must see him at once! I wonder how soon I can leave for New York." And then, fearfully, "I haven't written to him for a week,

and that was a horrid, formal little note. Oh, Phil, I want you! I need you!"

At last, they had reached Blondeau street, and were heading down Sixth. At last, they were turning into Concert, and nearing her home. She would write to Phil this afternoon. She would tell him she was leaving for New York soon.

Now they were pulling up at the curb in front of the Loring house, and without waiting for Chris to get out, she opened the door of the car, and stepped to the ground. "Good-by, Chris," she said breathlessly, and turned to smile at him.

He jumped from the car, and stood beside her. "Mary," he began, "think this thing over. Please think it over!"

Mary shook her head. "No, Chris. That won't do any good. My mind's made up." And placing her hand on his arm, she added, "I'm sorry, Chris . . . good-by."

There were sounds of voices in the living room as she entered the front hall. Mother was talking to someone, and Petey was there—and a man.

"Mary!" called her mother as the screen door slammed behind her. "Mary, dear, come in! You have a guest."

She had hoped her mother wouldn't call her. She had wanted to dash upstairs, and write her letter to Phil. Grudgingly, she turned from the doorway, she stared unbelievably at the tall man who had risen from his chair when her mother called.

"Phil!" she gasped. "Phil!" And quite oblivious of her mother's and Petey's presence, she ran the length of the room, and flung her arms about him.

"Mary!" laughed Phil, and stooped to kiss her. "Darling, are you really glad to see me?"

"I've never been so glad to see anybody in all my life!" Mary cried. "Oh, Phil, how did you happen to come?"

"I wanted to see you, you little goose!" Phil returned with a grin. "Your letters didn't suit me at all. They were too few and far between—and somehow, I felt you were getting farther and farther away from me."

Mrs. Loring, with a reluctant Petey in tow, tiptoed unnoticed from the room.

"But, Phil," Mary protested. "I was going to write you this afternoon! I know my letters have been—awful. I've—I've been in a dreadful muddle for months, but now, at last, things are all cleared up!"

"I knew your mind was in chaos about something or other, Mary dear," he said tenderly, "and I didn't want to rush you. Yet, darling, I was getting terribly impatient."

Mary looked down at the worn pattern of the living room rug. "But that confusion's all over now, Phil," she said, feeling as if a great weight were falling from her shoulders as she spoke the words.

Phil put his hand under her chin, and looked searchingly into her eyes. "Well, then," he demanded, "how about answering that question I asked you an hour or so ago? You see, I have to sail for England next week, and, dearest, I wish you'd marry me, and go along."

Mary touched his lean tan cheek with one of her hands. "Darling," she said softly, "I'll go anywhere in the world with you. I love you, Phil! At last I know I love you!"

Phil caught her in his arms, and holding her firmly against his heart, as if never again would he let her go, bent to kiss her lips.

[THE END]

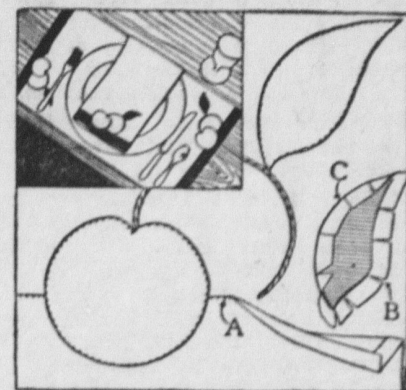
Wood Does Not Decay With Age; Fungus Is Chief Destroyer, Scientists Assert

Wood is almost imperishable, will last almost forever—provided it is protected against the attack of wood-destroying fungus, which causes decay, according to the U. S. Forest Products laboratory in Wisconsin. Timbers in the White House that were used in its construction in 1816 were recently found to be perfectly sound. Houses in New England that were built 300 years ago are still structurally intact. It is said that timbers several hundred years old have been recovered from the ruins of Indian pueblos in Arizona, while a part of a Roman emperor's houseboat that sank 2,000 years ago in Lake Nemi was sound enough to be identified by the Forest Products laboratory as spruce wood. Not long ago a log 7 feet in diameter was found in a tunnel being dug 150 feet below the bed of the Yakima river in Washington. A piece of it was sent to the Forest Products laboratory and the wood was identified as an extinct species of sequoia, of an age estimated by geologists at 12,000,000 years. These examples prove, the U. S. Forest Products laboratory says,

that wood does not necessarily decay with age; that decay is the result of only one thing, the attack of wood-destroying fungus. In the cases described in the foregoing the wood was protected against fungus attack by either keeping the wood dry or continuously saturated. These facts indicate the possibility of making fence posts last a long time, even if they be of soft wood like elm. Obviously fence posts are not protected against fungus attack, unless treated. It will pay well to treat all fence posts with creosote; but while it will prolong the life of a post to merely dip it in creosote, the most effective way is to heat the liquid so as to increase its penetrating qualities. Some farmers accomplish this by heating creosote in iron barrels, standing the posts in them and allowing them to "cook" a while. Some woods, like hickory, are destroyed by worms or borers, and in which case, if used for posts, the entire post must be treated, whereas ordinarily only that portion of the post which is set into the ground is treated.

HOW TO SEW

by Ruth Wyeth Spears



green outline stitch. The leaf is of the green material.

Experiment with cutting the cherry and leaf in paper. When you have cut a design that pleases you, make a pattern in lightweight cardboard. Cut the fabric a little larger than the pattern, clip the edge as at B; then press it over the pattern with a warm iron as at C to make a firm crease. Remove the pattern, and sew the pieces in place with fine hemming stitches.

NOTE: Readers who have not secured their copies of my two books should send in their orders at once. Your choice of the CRAZYPATCH QUILT leaflet showing 36 authentic stitches; or the RAG RUG LEAFLET will be included FREE with orders for both books, for the present. Everyone should have copies of these two books containing 96 How to Sew articles that have not appeared in the paper. This offer will be withdrawn soon. Send order with 25 cents immediately to Mrs. Spears, 210 S. Desplains St., Chicago, Ill., and both books will be mailed postpaid.

WATCH any class of kindergarten cutting patterns from colored paper, and your fingers will itch to pick up the scissors and try it yourself. Why not? The luncheon mat and napkin shown here offer a suggestion for a way to use your cut-out designs for simple but effective applique work.

The long sides of the mats are hemmed and the ends faced with one-inch bands of green, as at A. The napkins are also hemmed on two sides and faced with green bands on the other two. The stem for the bright red cherry follows a circular line embroidered in

Even a Beginner Can Knit This Bedspread



Pattern 6411

Knitting with two strands of string speeds the making of these 10 inch squares that even a beginner will show with pride. Keep one of these easy squares at hand to fill odd moments—you'll be surprised how many you'll get done. Before long you'll have enough to join into a lovely hand-knitted bedspread or scarf. Pattern 6411 contains instructions for making the square; illustration of it and of stitches; materials needed; photograph of square.

To obtain this pattern, send 15 cents in coins to the Sewing Circle, Household Arts Dept., 259 W. 14th St., New York, N. Y.

THE CHEERFUL CHERUB

I don't care so much for this frivolous talk Or for joking or meaningless laughter. But I love to sit out on our front porch at night And say deep things about the hereafter.

Makes 10 BIG GLASSES

Kool-Aid AT GROCERS

Austere in Solitude

Overbearing austerity is always the companion of solitude.—Plato.

CASH IN—Spare Time or Full Time

A MONEY-MAKING BUSINESS at your home. Every Man's Greatest Wish—Own Opportunity of the Century! In your own home—Independent of Jobs, Office, Shop, Store, or Wholesale Family. Constant returns—No Profit! Substantial Social Security for all—from Youth to Old Age. Ask for convincing evidence.

THE ARNDT BATTERY SYSTEM of Indoor Power Plants has fitted thousands of ambitious, energetic men and women from every clime—encouragement, and still care, to improve, prosper, and prospered positions in their communities. THIS ARNDT BATTERY SYSTEM of Indoor Power Plants has fitted thousands of ambitious, energetic men and women from every clime—encouragement, and still care, to improve, prosper, and prospered positions in their communities.

START FAST-GROWING BUSINESS in Your Home. Earn \$100-\$200 Monthly. No Experience Necessary. No Investment. No Risk. No Competition. No Selling. No Advertising. No Travel. No Dependence on Others. No Unpleasant Hours. No Unpleasant Conditions. No Unpleasant People. No Unpleasant Weather. No Unpleasant Noise. No Unpleasant Smells. No Unpleasant Vibration. No Unpleasant Heat. No Unpleasant Cold. No Unpleasant Humidity. No Unpleasant Dryness. No Unpleasant Dust. No Unpleasant Pests. No Unpleasant Insects. No Unpleasant Animals. No Unpleasant Plants. No Unpleasant Fungi. No Unpleasant Bacteria. No Unpleasant Viruses. No Unpleasant Parasites. No Unpleasant Parasitoids. No Unpleasant Predators. No Unpleasant Prey. No Unpleasant Competitors. No Unpleasant Symbionts. No Unpleasant Mutualists. No Unpleasant Commensals. No Unpleasant Parasitoids. No Unpleasant Predators. No Unpleasant Prey. No Unpleasant Competitors. No Unpleasant Symbionts. No Unpleasant Mutualists. No Unpleasant Commensals.

MILTON H. ARNDT

Dept. 93, P. O. Box 909, Trenton, N. J.

Man-Made Misery

A man is as miserable as he thinks he is.—Seneca.

A GREAT BARGAIN

VESPER TEA

PURE ORANGE PEKOE

50 CUPS for 10 CENTS

Ask Your Grocer

It takes more than CORN to make fine CORN FLAKES!

Kellogg's CORN FLAKES

THE ORIGINAL

THE WORLD-FAMOUS flavor of Kellogg's Corn Flakes comes from a secret recipe known only to Kellogg. No one has ever been able to match it!

THE ORIGINAL—THE LEADER FOR 33 YEARS

Copyright 1939 by Kellogg Company