

DAILY NOVELETTE

CAPTURE
By Rose Meredith

ELIZABETH viewed the blue wrap with some disfavor. It had been weeks ago, when her engagement to Billy Drake had been the newest and most wonderful thing in the world. The long silken fringe which bordered the wide sleeves had persuaded her to decide upon the garment. Billy admired its graceful lines—he had played with the fringe as he talked of their glorious future together—over the shoulders of the wrap, the various and sundry things that the fringed, tasseled, and fringed, tassels of flying paper, once blown by the wind from some passing bird, then, afterward, when a foolish understanding had clouded every-thing, Elizabeth had pulled off her ring—his ring—and dropped it into his reluctant hand. The ring fell and, dropping, the delicate setting caught on the wretched fringe! He had laughed grimly as he set about its dislodgment. "I hate the old thing!" she half mused, as she brought it from the wardrobe and tossed it about her shoulders. The day was cold and her suit was rather light in weight for the advancing season.

Outside the wind was moaning among the bare branches, and as she walked briskly toward the trolley car the heart of the little music teacher felt bleak and bare as the empty nests in the swaying trees.

As the car moved on, Elizabeth thought of the uninteresting pupil she was going to teach—Annie Smith, a child who had insisted upon learning to play "Hearts and Flowers"—and there had been many, many lessons, but Annie still stumbled over the same passages until Elizabeth was ready to cry with vexation. "From the time you were operating than usual," she had hinted that her mother was not pleased with her progress, and she had stumbled and fallen weeping over the dreadful passage in the old favored piece.

To her own surprise, Elizabeth comforted the child—for a while she forgot her own loneliness and pain while she brought a smile to the weeping and sullen lips. "Let us try again," she suggested gently, and to their mutual surprise they had tried again and conquered. It was with glad little face that she lifted to Elizabeth's said one, when the hour was ended.

"You have made me glad again," smiled Annie Smith.

Elizabeth thought of those words as she waited for the car that was to take her home. Would anything ever make her glad again? She knew that, behind her own little air of beauty, she carried an aching heart that never could be glad again without Billy Drake. She brushed away hot tears and entered the car with a dash of autumn red and blue checks. Some one moved along to make room for her, a strong hand steadied her as the car lurched forward.

"Thank you," she turned and smiled mechanically at—Billy Drake, he resumed his seat beside her! The wrap settled innocently about her slender form. Billy was replacing his hat, and, with dear familiar gesture, he laid his hand unconsciously smoothing the back of his sleek head. She saw it all—she knew it—she felt him so near, and all the while she sat straight and brown pany eyes. Any one sitting beside her might have thought her lovely face laughing and contented.

The flat-wheeled car clattered merrily on its way and Elizabeth noted with a heartick pang that they were near Queen street, her stopping place. Billy was probably going home—he lived a mile beyond Queen street, and when would she meet him again, even by accident?

"Queen!" bellowed the conductor, as the car rocked and rattled.

Elizabeth arose, swept the folds of her blue wrap about her and started for the door. She felt a sickening tug at the long fringe of her right sleeve. She would not look around. A wave of pink colored her face as she felt a slight weight on her sleeve—what was the caught in some one's umbrella, or pocketbook? Billy Drake had sat on her right—she would not look around, for there was a tittering laugh behind her. Some one else was getting off directly behind her.

"Step lively there!" sang out the motorman jovially, as the car rocked away on its flat-wheeled career.

Elizabeth whirled around and confronted Billy Drake's amused and, at the same time, apologetic smile.

"I am sorry, Miss Russell—I couldn't help it, you can see that."

"Help what?" she asked frostily.

At the same instant she looked down and saw—saw the fringe of her right sleeve wound implacably around one of the buttons of his overcoat. In this way had she innocently ensnared him in the car, had led him down the aisle and here he was.

"I didn't expect to get off here," he apologized; "I was going on to King street."

"I am very sorry," she said stiffly, and then in a sudden burst of vexation she added, "Why didn't you cut it off? Break it off. Now it's a wretched thing!" She pulled vigorously at the silken tangle of knotted threads.

He stood helplessly watching her stormy little face. His stern face softened. How unhappy they both were! How like children, breaking precious hours of their lives with silly misunderstandings. Were they always to be enemies?

He had even forgotten what it was all about.

Elizabeth gave one last tug and the threads snapped. The sudden release caused her to waver uncertainly. Billy's hand supported her—lingered on her arm—stayed there, boldly, as of old.

"I don't want to be set free," he said uncertainly, and Elizabeth, looking up, saw that his pleasant face was white, very white.

"I—don't—quite understand," stammered the girl.

"I will explain as we go along," he said, still holding tight to her arm. "It is growing colder—hear the wind!"

So they walked along Queen street as they had walked before the blue cape had entered their lives. Billy Drake explained and Elizabeth listened and murmured soft little answers, and they lingered in the tiny living room, where she whispered on the hearth. When Billy went home he went whistling down the street in the happy way. Elizabeth was dropping a kiss on the precious ring on her third finger. As the blue wrap was hung away in the wardrobe Elizabeth gave it a little tug. "You blessed old peacemaker!" she whispered.

MAN SHOT FROM AMBUSH

Third Instance of Firing Upon Autos Recently—Lunatic Suspected Georgetown, Del., March 6.—Shot mysteriously while driving between Selbyville and this town, George H. Howard, of Wilmington, was found unconscious in his car yesterday. Later at the Peninsula Hospital he told the authorities some one fired on him from a clump of trees, the shot striking him in the fleshy part of the arm. He speedily away, but loss of blood made him unconscious before he could reach town. The authorities, remembering two similar attacks on automobilists in this

county in the last five weeks, believe the shooting is being done by a de-

mented man. A search in the vicinity of the shooting revealed a rude hut in the clump of trees from which Howard said the shot was fired.

Recently the Rev. Earley Parks was fired upon on the same road. Only two weeks ago a shot struck the windshield of a Newford farmer's auto. His wife, who was on the front seat with him, was cut by the flying glass. According to those who have been attacked, the one who fired the shot made no attempt to show himself after the shooting.

SHIP IN DANGEROUS SHOAL

Matoa, With Cargo of Coal, on Blackfish Bank Off Virginia Lewes, Del., March 6.—The American steamship Matoa, with a cargo of coal from Norfolk for Boston, stranded yesterday on Blackfish Bank, a dangerous shoal off the Virginia coast. Coast guards from the Amateague and Wallops Beach stations went out to the vessel in a power lifeboat, but Captain Gilbert and his crew of twenty-one refused to leave the Matoa. The coast guard cutter Manning is on its way to the stranded ship from Norfolk.

Loaded deep with 8000 tons of coal, the Matoa is well up on the shoal and her bow out of the water. As long as the weather remains good her position is not considered dangerous. Shipping men said, however, it might be necessary to remove her cargo before the vessel could be floated. Blackfish Bank lies about six miles off shore, directly in the path of passing vessels.

MARTIAL LAW IN HONGKONG

Manila, P. I., March 6.—Martial law has been declared at Hongkong and the port has been closed as a result of the strike of Chinese seamen, according to unofficial advices received here by British Consul General Harrington.

In contradiction to the advices received by Consul General Harrington are press reports that the strike has been settled.

A&P

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VASSAR GIRL SPURNS HONOR

Refuses Phi Beta Kappa Key as Protest Against System

Philadelphia, March 6.—Miss Carolyn Whitney, of New Haven, a senior at Vassar College, has declined the membership recently offered her in the Phi Beta Kappa Chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

She announced last night that she would not accept the Phi Beta Kappa key, never has believed in the honor or low marks to students and throughout her college course she has protested against rating academic work in that manner.

She intends, upon being graduated, to give up the study of labor organization and was said to believe that to receive the honor she was only living up to the principles.

Miss Whitney is a niece of Miss Whittier, head of the German Society of Philadelphia, who has two daughters who are also Phi Beta Kappa members.