

# THE BREAKING POINT

By Mary Roberts Rinehart

Author of "Dangerous Days," "K," "The Amazing Interlude," and many other striking and successful novels. Copyright, 1922, by George H. Doran Co.

**WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY**  
**DR. DAVID LIVINGSTONE**, of whom there is a great deal of talk in the town, great but blind. He shows a secret concerning identity of her beloved nephew.  
**LUCY**, his sister, beloved by everybody in town.  
**DICK LIVINGSTONE**, in whose name she lives, a young man, great but blind. He shows a secret concerning identity of her beloved nephew.  
**WALTER WHEELER**, a handsome young man, who is the son of a wealthy family.  
**ELIZABETH WHEELER**, a beautiful girl, who is the daughter of a wealthy family.  
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The summer passed slowly. To David and Elizabeth it was a long waiting, but with this difference, that Elizabeth felt sometimes that hope was killing her. To David each day was a new day, and a night, each day was but one more of separation.

Dr. Reynolds had become a familiar figure in the village life by that time. David depended on him with a sort of grateful confidence that set him to grinding his teeth occasionally in a fury at his own helplessness. And, as the extent of the disaster developed, as he saw David falling and Lucy ailing, and when in time he met Elizabeth, the feeling of his own guilt was intensified.

He spent hours studying the case, and he was chiefly instrumental in sending Harrison Miller back to Norada in September. He had struck up the friendship with Miller over their common cause, and the night he was to depart that small inner group which was fighting David's battle for him formed a board of strategy in Harrison's tidy living room; Walter Wheeler and Basset, Miller and, tardily taken into their confidence, Dr. Reynolds.

The same group met him on his return, sat around with expectant faces while he got out his tobacco and laid a sheet of papers on the table and waited while they enquired. Laying Basset's hand on the table, he proceeded carefully to draw in a continuation of the trail beyond the pass, some sketches of mountains and a small square.

"I've got something," he said at last. "Not much, but enough to work on. Here's where you lost him, Basset." He pointed with his pencil. "He went on for a while on the horse. Then somehow he must have lost the horse, for he turned up on foot, date unknown, in a state of exhaustion at a cabin that lies here. I got lost myself, or I'd never have found the place. He was sick there for weeks, and he seems to have stayed on quite a while after he recovered, as though he couldn't decide what to do next."

Walter Wheeler stirred and looked up. "What sort of condition was he in when he left?"

"Very good, they said."

"You're sure it was Livingstone?"

"The man there had a tree fall on him. He operated. I guess that's the answer to more than that."

Reynolds said slowly, "It shows he had come back to himself. If he hadn't he couldn't have done it."

"And after that?" some one asked.

"I lost him. He left to take to the railroad, and he said nothing of his plans. If I'd been able to make open inquiries, I might have turned up something, but I couldn't. It's a hard proposition. I had trouble finding Hatfield Thorswald, too. She'd left the hotel and is living with her son. She swears she doesn't know where Elizabeth Hines is, and hasn't seen him for years."

"I only want him back," Elizabeth said. "I don't care how he comes, so he comes."

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The determination to live on until that return which he never ceased to expect only carried him so far, however. He felt no rest, no activity. There were times when he tried Lucy's sordid, when she felt that if he would only move about, go down stairs and at tend to his office, he would grow stronger. But there were times, too, when she felt that only the will to live was carrying him on.

Nothing further had developed, so far as they knew. The search had been abandoned. Lucy was no longer so sure as she had been that the house was still a surveillance, against Dick's possible return. Often she lay in her bed and faced the conviction that Dick was dead. She had never understood the talk about him and gone on about her, when Basset and Harrison Miller, and once or twice the psycho-analyst David had resulted in town, had got together in David's bedroom. The mind was the mind, and Dick was Dick. The thing about habit, over which David pored at night when he should have been looking for a board of strategy, was with an air of triumphant vindication, meant nothing to her.

A man properly trained in right habit of thinking and of action could not think wrong and go wrong. David argued. He even went further. He said that love was a habit, and that love would bring Dick back to him. That he could not force them.

So far they had kept from her Dick's real identity, but certain things they had told her. She knew that he had gone back, in some strange way, to the years before he came to Norada, and that he had temporarily forgotten everything since. But they had told her, too, and seemed to believe themselves, that it was only temporary.

At first the thought had been more than she could bear. But she had to live her life, and in such a way as to hide her fears. Perhaps it was good for her, the necessity of putting up a bold front, to join the conspiracy that was to hold Dick's place in the world against the hope of his return. And she still went to the Sayre house, sure that there at least there would be no curious glances, no too casual questions. She could not be sure of that even at home, for Nina was constantly questioning.

"I sometimes wonder," Nina began one day, and stopped.

"Wonder what?"

"Oh, well, I suppose I might as well go on. Do you ever think that if Dick had gone back, as they say he has, that there might be somebody else?"

"Another girl, you mean?"

"Yes. Some one he knew before."

"Nina, you're watching her. Sometimes she almost burst with the strain she was suppressing. She had been a small girl when Judson Clark had disappeared, but even at twelve she had known something of the story. She wanted frantically to go about the village and say to them: "Do you know who has been living here, when you used to get into the rooming house, one of the richest men in the world?" She built day dreams on that foundation. He would come back, for, of course, he would be found and acquitted, and buy the Sayre place, perhaps, or build a much larger one, and they would all go to Europe in his yacht. But she knew now that the woman Leslie had sent her flowers to had looked large in Dick's past, and she both hated and feared her. Not content with having given her, Nina, some bad hints, she saw the woman now, possibly blocking her ambitions for Elizabeth.

"What I'm getting at is this," she said, examining her polished nails critically. "If it does turn out that there was somebody, you'd have to remember that it was all years and years ago, and he's sensible."

"I guess so," Elizabeth said.

Before the meeting broke up Miller took a folded manuscript from the table and passed it to Basset.

"Copy of the Coroner's inquiry, after the murder," he said. "Thought it might interest you."

Then, for a time, that was all. Basset, poring at home over the inquest records, and finding them of engrossing interest, saw the futility of saving a man who could not be found. And even Nina's faith that the fabulously rich could not die obscurely began to fade as the summer waned. She restored some of her favor to Wallis Sayre, and even listened again to his alternanting hopes and fears.

And by the end of September he felt that he had gained real headway with Elizabeth. He had come to a point where she needed him more than she realized, where the call in her of youth for youth, even in trouble, was insisted. In return he felt his responsibility and responded to it. In the vernacular of the town he had "settled down," and the general trend of opinion, which had previously disapproved of him, was now that Elizabeth might do worse.

On a crisp night early in October he had brought her home from Nina's, and because the moon was full they sat for a time on the steps of the veranda. Wallis below her, stirring the dead leaves on the walk with his stick and looking up at her with boyish adoring eyes when she spoke. He was never very articulate with her, and her trouble had given her a strange new aloofness that almost frightened him. But that night, when she shivered a little, he reached up and touched her hand.

"You're cold," he said almost roughly. "Be sometimes rather savage, for fear he might be tender."

"I'm not cold. I think it's the dead leaves."

"Dead leaves?" he repeated, puzzled.

"You're a queer girl, Elizabeth. Why dead leaves?"

"I hate the fall. It's the death of the year."

"Nonsense. It's going to be for a long winter's nap. That's all. I'll bring you a wrap."

He went in and came out in a moment with her father's overcoat.

"Here," he said peremptorily. "Put this on. I'm not going to be called on the carpet for giving you a snuff."

To be continued tomorrow

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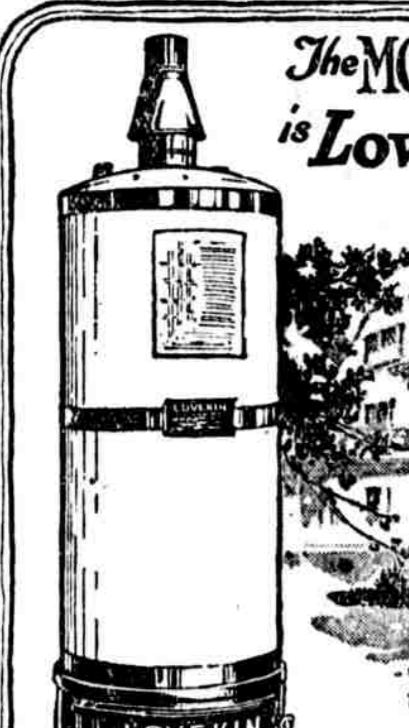
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# Wanamaker's Down Stairs Store

## TOMORROW THE Autumn Sale of Shoes

Shoes for Women, Men, Boys, Girls and Little Children, All at This Year's Lowest Prices—Some at Half and Less Than Half the Original Rates in Our Stocks

Women's Shoes, \$2.75 and \$3.75  
 Children's Shoes, \$2.35—Boys' Shoes, \$2.75, \$3.75—Girls' Shoes, \$2.90  
 Men's Shoes, \$3.40

Everybody likes to know when good shoes are reduced in price. This is an occasion when we have searched our entire Down Stairs Shoe Store for all broken sizes, all discontinued styles, all shoes showing marks of handling. Thousands of such shoes will be spread out for every one to see tomorrow—each pair with a new, decidedly lower price marked on the sole.

**2200 Pair Women's Low Shoes \$2.75**  
 A Third to More Than Half Less

<b>One-Strap Pumps</b> Black satin Black calfskin Gray suede Brown kidskin	<b>Mary Janes</b> Patent leather combined with gray suede	<b>Oxfords</b> Black calfskin Black kidskin
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There are one-strap pumps with turned soles and baby Louis heels in almost all sizes. There are one-strap pumps with turned soles and low heels. There are oxfords with substantial welted soles and medium heels. All these shoes come from our own regular stocks.

**741 Pair Women's Pumps \$3.75**  
 A Third to More Than Half Less

<b>Black satin</b> <b>Beige satin</b> <b>Brown satin</b>	<b>Black suede</b> <b>Tan calf</b> <b>Patent leather and suede</b>	<b>Silver cloth</b> <b>Gold cloth</b> <b>Patent leather</b>
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One-strap and three-buckle-strap styles. Mostly with turned soles. French, Spanish, baby Louis and medium heels. Some of the evening slippers are tarnished. Some of the others show slight marks of handling. All sizes in the group but not in each style. Included at \$3.75 are also some unusually good tan and black calfskin oxfords.

**1930 Pair Women's Pumps and Oxfords \$3.75**  
 Specially Priced

<b>One-strap Pumps</b> Black satin Brown kid Tan leather	<b>Cross-strap Pumps</b> Black satin Black kid	<b>Oxfords</b> Tan leather Black kid Black leather
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Cuban, French and baby Louis heels. Flexible stitched and welted soles. A dealer's overlot of exceptionally good shoes purchased to advantage and added to this sale. All sizes in E, C, and D widths among them.

**Children's Shoes \$2.35**  
 A Fifth to Almost Half Less

Sizes 5 to 8 in tan or white leather button shoes.  
 Sizes 9 to 11 in white buck or tan and white leather lace shoes.  
 Sizes 5 to 11 in tan and brown or patent leather and gray lace shoes.  
 Sizes 6 to 1 in tan and black leather lace shoes.

**Girls' Shoes \$2.90**  
 Quarter to Half Less

Sizes 2 1/2 to 6 in tan or black leather lace shoes in sensible wide-toe lasts.

**500 Pair Men's Shoes \$3.40**  
 A Third to More Than Half Less

Oxfords of tan or black calfskin or tan leather. High shoes of black kidskin or tan leather. Several styles among them and all sizes in some one or another style. Solidly made good leather shoes that men will need this Winter. Welted soles. Some have rubber heels already attached.

**Boys' Lace Shoes \$2.75**  
 Marked down to

Only a limited quantity of them. It's only fair to warn parents of that fact because the shoes are remarkably good at the price. Actually made of tan calfskin with the wide toes and welted soles that boys need. They have rubber heels already attached.

**Boys' Shoes \$3.75**  
 Marked down to

Tan calfskin lace shoes in medium-toe shapes with welted soles and rubber heels. Just taken out of our regular stocks and reduced to this new price.

Men and women—business people—parents—can save a good deal by investing as largely as their needs warrant in this sale. It is very rarely, of course, that such Wanamaker quality shoes as these can be had as low as \$2.35 to \$3.75.

Extra salespeople will be ready to give quick service to business men in the morning and at noontime in the Men's Shoe Store on the Gallery, just inside the door from the Subway. Extra salespeople also in the Women's and Children's Shoe Store, Down Stairs, at Chestnut Street.

## Mill's Clearaway of Chenille and Scotch Art Rugs at Half Price and Less

From a mill devoted exclusively to the making of rugs for interior decorators' special orders. The maker turned over to us his accumulated surplus lots of small cotton chenille rugs and lute Scotch art rugs and a limited number of wool Scotch art rugs in room sizes—all of interestingly original kinds. They are the sorts of rugs people like who want something unusual in color, exceptional in durability and moderate in price. One knows they will wear and wear by the thick, soft "feel" of them, and they are all double-faced and reversible.

**The Small Rugs Are on the Central Aisle**

27x54-Inch Scotch Art Rugs, \$1.50	4.6x7.6 ft. rugs, \$6.50 and \$7.	9x9 ft. rugs, \$14.25 and \$23.25.
36x72-Inch Scotch Art Rugs, \$2.25	6x9 ft. rugs, \$9.50.	8.3x10.6 ft. rugs, \$15.75.
	7.6x9 ft. rugs, \$11.75 and \$14.	9x12 ft. rugs, \$17. \$22 and \$30.

Woven with a cotton warp and tough jute filling. In unusual stripes and plain colors, mostly in blue and brown, with a few in rose and green.

**Wool Scotch Art Rugs in Room Sizes Are in the Rug Store**

Soft and nappy and sure to be durable, they are so thickly piled. In desirable combinations of blue and tan, rose and blue and green and tan; plain colors with contrasting borders, unusual block patterns and "Chippendale" effects.

Limited number in each size, but besides the ones enumerated there are a number of new and odd size rugs offered at proportionately attractive prices.

(Down Stairs Store, Central Aisle) (Down Stairs Store, Chestnut)