

WOMEN AND THEIR INTERESTS

"Their Married Life"

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"There's going to be an entertainment in town," volunteered Carrie as she came down stairs and found Helen embroddering in the living room.

"Suppose we all go up—the children will enjoy it and it won't hurt them to be out late for this once."

Helen looked up from her work. "But, Carrie, Winifred is too young to go to an evening entertainment of any kind. She has never been anywhere, and besides she isn't so strong as yet. Her operation was only performed about three weeks ago!"

"Nonsense, Helen," with the brisk assertiveness that always characterized Warren's sister, "the child would have a good time. You can't expect to keep her wrapped up in cotton wool all her life. Just look at my children. I don't worry about them and they are a credit to me. Jane," to one of the servants who was passing, "did Arthur put his coat on when he went out to play?"

"Yes, ma'am, I put it on him myself," said the maid, pausing as she passed through the room.

"Children are a care," said Carrie, sighing as she turned back to Helen. "But to return to the subject, you'll let Winifred go to-night, won't you? I agree with you that it would be bad as a general diet, but just this once; the boys enjoy having her with them. I've often wished that she had a sister."

Helen hated to be firm on a matter that she thought only right, for the reason that Warren had always wanted her to be friendly with Carrie, and if she did anything now, just as things were apparently running very smoothly, Warren would be sure to blame it entirely on her.

"I wish you wouldn't ask me to do it, Carrie. I know it would be bad for Winifred. The night air is so cool now I would so much rather not." Helen was clinging to the bare chance that Carrie would not insist upon her doing what she was sure was a wrong thing for Winifred, but Carrie had no idea of giving in to Helen.

"If Warren were here I'm sure he would say that you are acting foolishly, Helen. However, Winifred is your child and you have a right to do as you see fit regarding her welfare. As long as you think it would be wrong to allow her to go, we shall all remain at home. I told the children that there wasn't anything to be disappointed, but then that isn't of any consequence."

"But, Carrie, that isn't necessary. You go and take the children and let me stay home with Winifred. Or perhaps Jane would stay with her until we return and then I could go, too."

"I promised Jane that she could go with her cousin and I wouldn't hear of your staying home alone. We'll all stay home and the children can go to bed as usual."

"Very well, Winifred may go if her staying home is going to interfere with your plans, Carrie; but I hope that in the future you won't plan anything that may include Winifred at night, or I shall have to refuse to allow her to go at all!" Helen could not refrain from adding this, and Carrie flushed.

That she could never be very friendly with Warren's sister impressed itself on Helen with renewed emphasis.

"I suppose you and Louise see a great deal of each other," Carrie said finally, changing the subject now that she had won Helen's consent to her plans. "I haven't seen her since she and Bob were married, but I'm pretty sure I could never care for her. Her actions at the hospital at the time

that Bob was sick were absolutely unwomanly."

She paused, as though she expected Helen to say something at that point, but Helen went on with her sewing without raising her head. She remembered Carrie's scathing remarks about Louise that day at the hospital, but she was determined to ward off any further argument with Carrie if she possibly could.

Helen stands up for her friend Louise. "I remember that you were the only one of the family who stood up for her," went on Carrie, determined to bring up unpleasant topics of the past. "Was it because you really approved of her actions or because you wanted to go against us?"

Helen thought that she might have said that it was because she knew how it felt to be heartily disapproved of by the entire family. That Warren's family had never liked her had always made her unhappy because she felt somehow that it vaguely influenced Warren in his treatment of her.

Several times when they had been angry Warren had brought the fact home to her in a way that hurt, and aside from the real genuine liking that she had for Louise was a determination to fight for her rights in the face of any opposition that the family might bring to bear against her.

"I never saw anything unwomanly in Louise," said Helen finally; "the fact of her being at the hospital with Bob was a very natural thing, that I understood perfectly. Think it had great deal to do with Bob's present happiness."

"You think Bob is so happy?" queried Carrie. "I never thought Louise was the kind of a girl who could please Bob."

"Louise is the only kind of a girl who could make Bob happy, because she is the only girl in the world who could hold his love," said Helen with the knowledge born of her own shortcomings in her heart.

"I thought her too independent, too careless of conventions," said Carrie, still unconvinced.

"But, it was because she loved Bob, Carrie, not because she was foolishly running in the way of public gossip. I admire Louise more than I can say, and I have grown to love her dearly."

"Well, I mustn't stay and gossip here all morning," she said, getting up quickly. "I haven't done any of my ordering. How about your outfit for lunch? I wonder what the children are doing."

"There they are," crossing to the window; "now I wonder what the boys have done with Winifred's hat. There she is putting it on; she saw me looking at her. Children are getting into mischief if someone isn't continually watching them!"

"Winifred ought to come in now," said Helen, glancing at the clock; "she has been out for over an hour. I do hope she doesn't take cold from going without a hat!"

"They're going around to the back," said Carrie. "Jane will let them in through the kitchen. Do you know, Helen, I believe I'll ask Bob and Louise up for a week-end some time. I don't like to feel as though I'd misjudged her."

Helen was silent for a moment. She wanted to say how nice that would be, but she felt that Carrie had a motive of some kind behind the thought that had prompted her to speak of the subject now.

"I'd like to see if Bob has changed any," Carrie went on. "You know, Helen, you might have done a lot with Warren if you hadn't always given in to him the way you have!"

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The Last Shot. By FREDERICK PALMER. Bouchard was losing flesh; his eyes were sinking deeper under a heavier frown. His duty being to get information, he was gaining none. His duty being to keep the Grays' secrets, there was a leak somewhere in his own department. He quizzed subordinates; he made abrupt transfers, to no avail. Meanwhile, the Grays were taking the approaches to the main line of defense, which had been thought relatively immaterial but had been found shrewdly placed and their vulnerability overestimated. The thunders of batteries hammering them became a routine of existence, like the passing of trains to one living near a railroad. The guns went on while tea was being served; they ushered in dawn and darkness; they were going when sleep came to those whom they later awakened with a start. Fights as desperate as the one around the house became features of this period, which was only a warming-up practice for the war demon before the orgy of impending assault on the main line. Marta began to realize the immensity of the chessboard and of the forces engaged in more than the bare statement of numbers and distances. If a first attack on a position failed, the wires from the Galland house repeated their orders to concentrate more guns and attack again. In the end the Browns always yielded, but grudgingly, calculatingly, never being taken by surprise. The few of

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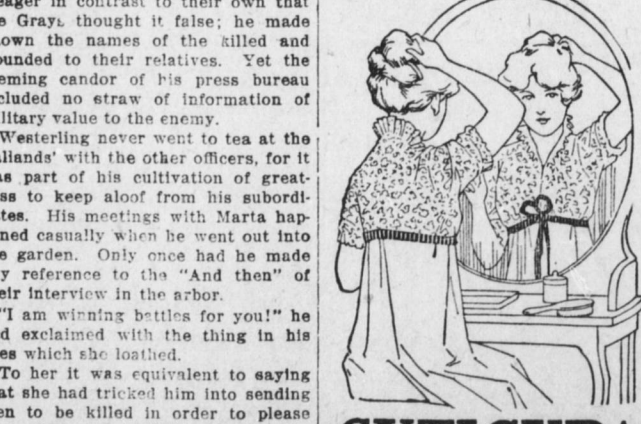
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them who fell prisoners said, "God with us! We shall win in the end!" and answered no questions. Gradually the Gray army began to feel that it was battling with a mystery which was fighting under cover, falling back under cover—a tenacious, watchful mystery that sent sprays of death into every finger of flesh that the Grays thrust forward in assault. "Another position taken. Our advance continues," was the only news that Westering gave to the army, his people, and the world, which forgot its sports and murders and divorces cases in following the progress of the first great European war for two generations. He made no mention of the costs; his casualty lists were secret. The Gray hosts were sweeping forward as a slow, irresistible tide; this by Partow's own admission. He announced the loss of a position as promptly as the Grays its taking. He published a daily list of casualties so meager in contrast to their own that the Grays thought it false; he made known the names of the killed and wounded to their relatives. Yet the seeming candor of his press bureau included no straw of information of military value to the enemy. Westering never went to tea at the Gallands' with the other officers, for it was part of his cultivation of greatness to keep aloof from his subordinates. His meetings with Marta happened casually when he went out into the garden. Only once had he made any reference to the "And then" of their interview in the arbor. "I am winning battles for you!" he had exclaimed with the ring in his eyes which she loathed. To her it was equivalent to saying that she had tricked him into sending her to be killed in order to please her. She despised herself for the way he confided in her; yet she had to go on keeping his confidence, returning a tender glance with one that held out hope. She learned not to shudder when he spoke of a loss of "only ten thousand." In order to rally herself when she grew faint-hearted to her task, she learned to picture the lines of his face hard-set with five-against-three brutality, while in comfort he ordered multitudes to death, and, in contrast, to recall the smile of Dellarme, who asked his soldiers to undergo no risk that he would not share. And after every success he would remark that he was so much

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