

# Women AND THEIR INTERESTS

## "Their Married Life"

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Helen quickened her footsteps as she glanced into the druggist's window on the corner. The hands pointed to twenty minutes past five, and Warren would be sure to be home waiting for her she didn't hurry. She had thought there was plenty of time. Now, if she hadn't stopped to look at the sale of silk hosiery this wouldn't have happened, and she did so hate to be late.

As she hurried along toward the subway she reflected to herself that she had had a disappointing day. From the very first things had gone wrong; everything that she had planned on buying was either too high or else not good enough for the money, and she had planned everything out so carefully before starting downtown.

She reached the subway and ran down the flight of steps. A rush of warm air met her, and she saw that the train was just pulling out. Every little thing that detained her served to make her more nervous, and she glanced at the clock hurriedly—half-past five. She would be late. Well, it couldn't be helped; she would make the best of it. She bought a magazine and paid for it mechanically. The next train thundered in and she stepped on with the crowd.

It was later than she was accustomed to traveling uptown. The train was filled with working people on their way home, and Helen found herself wedged in between two young girls, who were evidently stenographers working in the same building and who chattered incessantly about their affairs.

Helen hung onto the long metal pole that ran down from the ceiling of the car, and at last, as the crowd gradually thinned, sat down and opened her magazine. If she had not been engrossed in a story she would have heard the conductor shout: "Change for Broadway," but as it was she was unconscious of the fact that she had taken the Lenox avenue train by mistake until she looked suddenly as they stopped at a station that was strange to her.

Then the fact burst upon her, and she half rose from her seat only to sink back again as the train started. Why had she done so foolish a thing to-night of all nights? A sob rose in her throat, for she was nervous and tired, but she choked it back. The only thing to be done was to get out at the next station and go across town, but that would take a dreadful time, and in the meanwhile Warren would be home waiting for his dinner. At the next station she got out and hurried upstairs.

"Where can I get a crosstown car?" she asked of a boy who was lounging at the top of the stairs smoking a cigaret.

He smiled at her foolishly and pointed across the street. Five or ten minutes passed while she was waiting, but at last a car came in sight, and a few minutes later she was sinking with a relieved little sigh into a seat; and had opened her pocketbook for the fare.

Her little purse was not in its accustomed place and she searched quickly in the bottom of her bag. The conductor had passed on to collect other fares and was now coming back to her. Hurriedly she dumped the contents of the pocketbook into her lap, but there was no purse among the things.

She was terribly disturbed, but at last she found a solitary dime. Some one had stolen her purse, she thought in tears when she finally reached the apartment house.

Warren was in the living room turning the paper over impatiently as she entered the apartment. She discovered that she had forgotten her key and Nora answered the door with an injured look on her face. Helen remembered that she had promised Nora to have dinner early so that she might go to the moving pictures. The discovery did not make her feel any better.

In her own room Helen pulled off her hat and fluffed up her hair with her fingers.

"Dear, have you been waiting for me long?" she said apologetically as she hurried into the living room and kissed Warren on the top of his head. "I'm sorry, but everything seemed to go wrong to-day. I suppose you're starving. Let's go right on out to dinner."

"I'd like to know where you've been all this time," Warren answered sarcastically. "I should think an afternoon would be enough for a shopping trip without extending it into the night, too."

"It's been a horrid day," she faltered, "everything went wrong; I lost my pocketbook."

"Well, don't worry about it," said Warren with gruff kindness; "how much did you lose?"

"Twelve dollars, dear; isn't that awful? I lost it in the subway when I bought a magazine."

"Well, it couldn't be helped," said Warren finally; "you'd better stop crying or you'll wake up Winifred, besides you'll have a headache and keep me awake all night. You women are all the same."

(Another incident in this fascinating series will appear here soon.)

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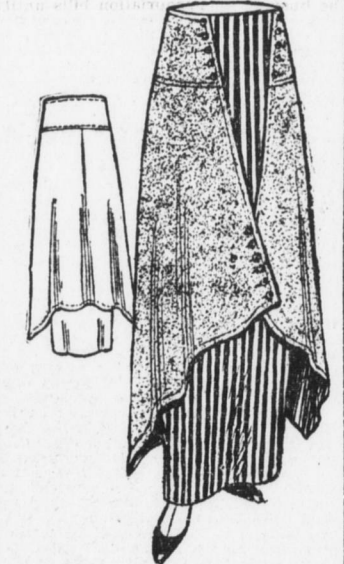
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Jad Salts is inexpensive, cannot injure, makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which everyone should take now and then to keep the kidneys clean and active. Druggists here say they sell lots of Jad Salts to folks who believe in overeating kidney trouble while it is only trouble.—Advertisement.

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## THE LAST SHOT

By FREDERICK PALMER  
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[Continued]  
"When you saw me brought on this war to gratify your ambition, I chose to be one of the weapons of war; I fought for civilization, for my home, with the only means I had against the wickedness of a victory of conquest—the precedent of it in this age—a victory which should glorify such trickery as you practised on your people."  
"I should like to shoot you dead!" cried Bellini.  
"And you let me make love to you!" Westerling said in a dazed, groping monotone to Marta.  
Such a wreck was he of his former self that she found it amazing that she could not pity him. Yet she might have pitied him had he plunged into the fight; had he tried to rally one of the broken regiments; had he been able to forget himself.  
"Rather, you made love to yourself through me," she answered, not harshly, not even emphatically, but merely as a statement of passionless fact. "If you dared to endure what you ordered others to endure for the sake of your ambition; if—"  
She was interrupted by a sharp zip in the air. Westerling dodged and looked about wildly.  
"What is that?" he asked. "What?"  
Five or six zips followed like a charge of wasps flying at a speed that made them invisible. Marta felt a brush of air past her cheek and Westerling went chalky white. It was the first time he had been under fire. But these bullets were only strays. No more came.  
"Come, general, let us be going!" urged the aide, touching his chief on the arm.  
"Yes, yes!" said Westerling hurriedly.  
Francis, who had picked up the coat that had fallen from Westerling's shoulders with his start at the buzzing, held it while his master thrust his hands through the sleeves.  
"And this is wiser," said the aide, unfastening the detachable insignia of

the helplessness of engineers and of levers when the machine was broken; the warning of it to those who undertake war lightly.

The Browns' rifle flashes kept on steadily weaving their way down the slopes, their reserves pressing close on the heels of the skirmishers in greedy swarms. A heavy column of Brown in-



He Was Dipping His Fingers in the Cavity and Writing, "Kill Me!"

fantry was swinging in toward the myriad-legged, writhing gray caterpillar on the pass road and many field-batteries were trotting along a parallel road. Their plan developed suddenly when a swath of gun-fire was laid across the pass road at the mouth of the defile, as much as to say: "Here we make a gate of death!" At the same time the head of the Brown infantry column flashed its bayonets over the crest of a hill toward the point

where the shells were bursting. These men minded not the desperate, scattered rifle-fire into their ranks. Before their eyes was the prize of a panic that grew with their approach. Kinks were out of legs stiffened by long watches. The hot breath of pursuit was in their nostrils, the fever of victory in their blood.

In the defile, the impulse of one Gray straggler, who shook a handkerchief aloft in fatalistic submission to the inevitable, became the impulse of all. Soon a thousand white signals of surrender were blossoming. As the firing abruptly ceased, Marta heard the faint roar of the mighty buzzards of the hunters over the size of their bag.

Some doctors of different regiments thrown together in the havoc of remnants of many organizations, with the help of hospital-corps men, were trying to extricate the wounded from among the dead. They heard a woman's voice and saw a woman's face. They did not wonder at her presence, for there was nothing left in the world for them to wonder at. Had an imp from hell or an angel from heaven appeared, or a shower of diamonds fallen from the sky, they would not have been surprised. Their duty was clear; there was work of their kind to do, endless work. Units of the broken machine, in the instinct of their calling they struggled with the duty nearest at hand. They begged her to go back to the house; this was no place for her.

But Marta did not want safety. Danger was sweet; it was exaltation. She was helping, actually helping; that was enough. She envied the peaceful dead—they had no nightmares—as she aided the doctors in separating the bodies that were not, and she steeled herself against every ghastly sight save one, that of a man lying with his legs pinned under a wagon body. His jaw had been shot away. Slowly he was bleeding to death, but he did not realize it. He realized nothing in his delirium except the nature of his wound. He was dipping his finger in the cavity and dab by dab, writing "Kill me!" on the wagon body. It sent reeling waves of red before her eyes. Then a shell burst near her and a doctor cried out:  
"She's hit!"  
But Marta did not hear him. She heard only the dreadful crack of the splitting shrapnel jacket. She had a sense of falling, and that was all.

The next that she knew she was in a long chair on the veranda and the vague shadows bending over her gradually identified themselves as her mother and Minna.

"I remember when you were telling of the last war that you didn't swoon at the sight of the wounded, mother," Marta whispered.

"But I was not wounded," replied Mrs. Galland.

Marta ceased to be only a consciousness swimming in a haze. With the return of her faculties, she noticed that both her mother and Minna were looking significantly at her forearm; so she looked at it, too. It was bandaged.

"A cut from a shrapnel fragment," said a doctor. "Not deep," he added.

"Do I get an iron cross?" she asked, smiling faintly. It was rather pleasant to be alive.

"All the crosses—iron and bronze and silver and gold!" he replied.

All firing except occasional scattered shots had now ceased in the immediate vicinity, though in the distance could be heard the snarl of the firmer resistance that the Grays were making at some other point. The Galland house, for the time being, was isolated—in possession of neither side.

"Isn't there something else I can do to help with the wounded?" Marta asked. She longed for action in order to escape her thoughts.

"You've had a terrible shock—when you are stronger," said the doctor.

"When you have had something to eat and drink," observed the practical Minna authoritatively.

(To Be Continued)

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