

A Page of Interesting Short Stories

Those Honest, Tender Gray Eyes

By Elsie Endicott



OR six hours she had been doing the same thing at intervals of twelve minutes. In fact, she had been doing it for several days. She put on a coat, walked through a door and down a room for fifty feet, turned, walked back again, passed through the door, took off that coat and put on another one. There were no false movements, no delays. The whole performance was regulated as by machinery. And it was unutterably monotonous and wearying.

It was a mid-August day, and the best the fans could do was to stir the fetid heat of the showrooms. The buyers sat in their booths gripping pencils and pads with moist fingers. The collars of the men wilted. The women, though dressed more sanely, were pale with discomfort. But they had come to town to buy coats, and upon the present accuracy of their judgment depended future sales and their own positions. They saw only

the garments themselves as the models moved past, and approved or disapproved, according to their several fancies. And yet Jenny Cass knew that every girl suffered even as she did. The coats were uniformly heavy and exertion added to the torture. Her own shoulders and feet ached and she was faint and sick with weariness. The business of being a model was abhorrent to her. She had been forced into it. She had come to the city with her head full of dreams, hopes and ambitions. Her mother was dead and her father had left her to shift for herself. A girl she had known had drawn her into the city. For a while they had lived together and worked in the same store. Then the other girl had deserted her. Jenny had kept at work, trying to be clean and healthy and content on \$6 a week. Suddenly a new manager had dismissed her.

It was, of course, the wrong season of the year, but bravely she had gone from store to store seeking employment. As her money went, she became shabbier. She was invariably asked how long she had been out of work. Her references seemed valueless. She was always dismissed with-out hope.

It was then she got her chance. A cloak firm advertised for models. She looked in the glass. It seemed to her that she lacked all the requirements except that of being tall and correctly proportioned. She was pallid with trouble and want. The last little vestige of prettiness had been worried out of her young face. Half in despair she put on her worn-out, black hat, inked the worn spots on her shoes and gloves, brushed her forlorn blue suit and went to see what would happen.

A woman sat at the desk—a woman who perhaps knew other women. She looked at Jenny's references and "Jenny herself. 'You'll do,'" she said. "And you can go right to work at \$9 a week."

That night Jenny had a good meal—the first in days. A week's pay filled her with hope. By the time she was through with this job some other might beckon.

What Did the Rector Say?

By Will Seaton



WE were sitting on the veranda shelling peas. I had the big easy chair and sister sat in a little straight backed rocker, with the dish in her lap, and a bag of fat green peas at her feet.

With nine in it, you must not take them out, but save it and hang it over the doorway and then read your fat by the next man who enters."

So, what interest would she have in such proceedings? She had done it to tease me, and I wasn't going to give her the satisfaction of knowing I cared.

Heaven! 'An old maid all my life.' 'Was he the only one?' 'No, it seemed there was someone else who came to the door, and wouldn't come in. It was my dearest chum's brother, and, alas, the day!

And so I told him the whole story, and how sorry I had been that he didn't at least come inside the door that afternoon, for Nannie said that he called just before the rector.

He listened, but before I got there he was shaking with laughter. He walked till I got to where I imagined the rector walking up the street with the pod on that shining silk hat of his, and then he burst out and laughed long and loud.

Then, as he tells me, since anything to do with me or my house was becoming dear to him, he saved it, and had never quite felt like throwing it away.

The Allowance Came All Right

By Annette Angert



OTHER had been reading the papers. She had read in that column dedicated to the "Sewing Circle," the greater part of the animated discussion about the necessity of wives having allowances.

She thought and planned and planned and thought, wondering how she was going to get that allowance, now that she had decided to have it. A happy thought came to her mind.

Dinner finished, she cleared the dishes, gave Tom his favorite pipe and chair, and hurried the children off to bed. These and various other duties being fulfilled, she took her knitting, drew a chair up near her husband's, and began:

"Well, now, Tom," she began, in a coaxing tone, "if I am as you say, don't you think you could spare me an allowance every week, like all the other women have? About two dollars a week would be enough."

It ran thus: "Am going to mother's to dinner with the children. You will have to get your own dinner."

And in the midst of it all was his wife, placidly reading a novel. "Mary, what's the matter?" he inquired in astonishment.

It is needless to say that mother accepted the allowance, but it is necessary to add that, when some years later, at the marriage of their eldest daughter, Mary handed her future son-in-law a check for five thousand dollars, Tom was heard to remark that he never regretted the day his wife struck for an allowance.

Love Letters That Have Made Good

Contributed by H. S.
EAREST ABOVE ALL
—Oh, darling boy, if you were here tonight with me! I seem eternally since you left me. Close your eyes for a minute, boy, and think, think of last night. I can see you as you stood there on the rocky and wave-beaten shore, your hair blowing carelessly above your boyish face and your deep blue eyes looking down upon me, so seriously and so full of tender love.

have to write you and tell you I love you. Yes, I love you with all my heart. The minute I met you I knew I had found my ideal. Perhaps you have already guessed my love for you, although I tried very hard not to show it on account of Jim; but, dear, how could I appear so totally indifferent when my heart was full of you?

est warrior is a generous one, even to his foe. As I stand at my window tonight, looking at the stars, I know that somewhere they are, shining down on you. I do not fear for thee, but, oh my brave one, I want you! I want you! Because you need me so. Do not fear for me; I am safe.

Everyone who knows you speaks good of you. I am not sorry that I have trusted you in all. I love you because you are my ideal.

My Dear—Received your letter this a. m. and it sure was all to the good. I was afraid that may be you had forgotten me.

My Dear—If I could only express in this letter the deep anxiety I am feeling for you tonight. It seemed too bad that I must leave you to go abroad when I was needed so much to sustain and cheer you.

Thou Lover of My Soul—My heart is yearning for the day when there will be no more separation, since you have left me and gone ahead to the home that will be eternally yours. I dream of you, and dreaming makes the time to come seem so very near.

Contributed by A. F. L.
Dear Mell—I'm desperate. I simply

Contributed by R. B. J.
My Dear Brave Hero Man—I am thinking of you tonight, thinking of you, and longing for the day to come when we can claim each other before the whole world.

Contributed by P. S. W.
My Dearest John—Do you not think it would be well for you to take your vacation at this time and join me in my perfect enjoyment of the Cape? If you came there would then be nothing lacking in my contentment.

Contributed by F. R. I.
My Dearest Friend—It is just a little over a year since we first met that day that has meant so much to me. How my heart thrilled when our eyes met, and as the rest of the day passed I found myself longing for you.

Contributed by J. I. C.
My Dearest Queen—If I could only express in this letter the deep anxiety I am feeling for you tonight. It seemed too bad that I must leave you to go abroad when I was needed so much to sustain and cheer you.

Contributed by K. W.
My Own True Love—It was only last night that you held me in your arms, and yet it seems a year. Dear heart, can it be that you have left me forever?

Contributed by A. B. N.
Thou Lover of My Soul—My heart is yearning for the day when there will be no more separation, since you have left me and gone ahead to the home that will be eternally yours. I dream of you, and dreaming makes the time to come seem so very near.