

Reading for Women and all the Family

Little Talks by Beatrice Fairfax

Bringing Up Father

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By McManus



"My husband and I have lived under the same roof for five years without speaking. When it is necessary for me to get money for household expenses or the children I write him a business letter and he sends me a check. We converse before people as if we were devoted; we have guests to dinner who regard us as a model couple, but when we are alone we never exchange a word, or meet, or look at one another if it can be avoided.

"There is no prospect of a change in our relations. I have to endure this, as I have no independent means and must consider the future of my children, which would be imperiled by an exposure of the family scandal. I have no talents or ability to make money, which would help matters considerably.

The foregoing is an extract from a letter, without name or address, and I conclude the writer has endured pent-up horrors so long that she feels she must confide in someone, even a stranger.

Domestic situations of this sort are, unfortunately, not as rare as they are, and would lead one to suppose. There is the well-known case of the New England family consisting of a mother and two daughters. The daughters lived in the same house, sat at the same table and went to church for forty years without speaking.

To Funeral Without Speaking. They rode to their mother's funeral in the same carriage without breaking silence; finally one of them became ill; the other, full of the grim sense of duty and New England conscience, nursed her sister until the fully; death at last broke the bond, but the silence remained to the end. Mary Wilkins Freeman has written of similar cases in her New England

studies. The thing that always impressed me about domestic relationships of this kind is the tremendous waste of energy involved in staying "mad." Think of the constant vigilance and perseverance that must be put into such militant neutrality. Think of being about to say something and then having to check it because one was "mad." Think of keeping up counterfeit conversations for the purpose of deceiving strangers at one's home table! Think of the grotesqueness of the whole situation—of talking, living and having one's being for the effect it produced on someone else. Think of living an abnormal life for the purpose of appearing normal.

Think of having the outward aspects of affection and tenderness bestowed, while the heart of things was frozen!

Sanity revolts at such a state of affairs, at the endless deception, the elaboration of purpose in the interests of people not concerned. Why pay such deference to the world, then tear up one's own heartstrings?

Was It Some Little Thing? The poor lady who wrote to me did not divulge the cause of the family tragedy. Was it some little thing that has grown and thriven with the care, thought and attention that the unfortunate couple have lavished upon it?

Or was it something that apparently warranted the stand they have taken? Again, could anything be sufficiently grievous to warrant such endless deception, such constant violation of one's sense of integrity?

If the cause of such bitter disagreement is irreconcilable, would not a dignified separation be better than all this spectral display of a domesticity that no longer exists? There is, too, the question of the children and their welfare. The wife says they would do less well if the true state of things were known. I almost doubt that children reared in an atmosphere of duplicity must reflect some of the conditions about them. Children—until we admit warp their souls with false ideals—are so straight reared, so true, so wholesomely natural in their point of view that they know instinctively, where, with our duller perceptions, only surmise.

It would seem, in their interests, that the parents might attempt a reconciliation, or, that being out of the question, they might make the best of a separation. Anything seems better than the counterfeit amenities for the benefit of strangers, while the soul of the home is desolate.

In the meantime, if I were that woman, I'd try myself for some kind of "job." Her letter is that of an intelligent woman, and these days, with opportunities of work beseeching us on every side, there is no excuse for a woman's humiliation in being a dependant. A few dollars in her purse that she can call her own will add greatly to her self-respect.

THE FOUR OF HEARTS

A SERIAL OF YOUTH AND ROMANCE

By VIRGINIA VAN DE WATER

CHAPTER LIII

(Copyright, 1918, Star Company) Halfway down the stairs Cynthia Long paused. Mr. Van Saun had told her that Milton was waiting for her down here; that he and she were to have tea together. Her heart beat fast at the thought.

Her recent conversation with her cousin, and Dora's excited confession, were fresh in her mind. Edward Van Saun's acknowledgment of his fears for his son, and his renewed expression of condemnation of loveless unions, had agitated Cynthia so that she longed to be alone to face the present situation. She wondered if she might slip out of the house without waiting for tea. Yet that would seem rude to her host.

A step in the hall below reminded her that some one might note her hesitation, and she hurried on down the stairs. At their foot she came face to face with Milton Van Saun. "I have been waiting for you," he said. "Dad told me he would let me see you after he had had his confab with you. It was a sort of a reward for a good boy who came home early, I suppose."

He laughed as he led her into the drawingroom, yet his manner lacked its natural boyishness. He was placing the tea-tray on a small table, and neither of the pair spoke until she had withdrawn. "Will you pour the tea, Cynthia?" Milton asked.

She obeyed silently. The situation had a domestic kind of air about it, she reflected, then, rightly, gave her attention to the task in hand.

"Have some cinnamon toast," Milton urged. "It's really very good."

"I say, this is cozy, isn't it?" the man said.

"And the cinnamon toast is delicious," Cynthia remarked. "What trivialities to utter when their hearts were full of serious matters, she thought. She could think of absolutely nothing to say. Only three things were in her mind—Dora's lack of love for Milton; Milton's unhappiness; the sin of her own prospective loveless marriage. And she could speak of none of these.

But a moment later Milton made speech on one of the subjects necessary. **A Pertinent Question** "Cynthia," he said bluntly, "what's the matter with Dora? She's not like herself these days. What's troubling her?" Cynthia looked at him calmly, in spite of her perturbation. "I cannot tell you, Milton," she replied. "You would better ask Dora."

"But that does no good!" he declared. "Let me speak frankly with you, Cynthia, for you are a good friend and I trust you absolutely."

Just what his father had said only a few minutes ago!

"Well," he went on, when she made no protest, "I have tried to get the truth out of Dora. But for some reason she is afraid to tell me how she feels. She evades the main question. Something came up the other night that made me suspect that everything was not just as her family pretended to believe. But she gave me no chance to learn the facts. Since then I have not been able to bring myself to ask her the one question that would settle things. But, in spite of that, she had shown me in unmistakable ways what her answer to that question would be."

"What is the question?" Cynthia inquired, gently.

"Whether she loves me or not. Ah! I see by your face that you know about it, but I will not ask you to tell me. Only there is one question that you can answer honorably. It is this: Does what you have seen for yourself make you think that Dora is happy?"

"No," she said simply. "I was sure of that," the man exclaimed. "And I am sure of another thing. That is that Dora does not love me and does not want to marry me."

He sprang to his feet and walked to the window, standing there with his back to the room.

Cynthia obeyed an impulse she could not have explained. Setting her cup down, she rose hastily and crossed the room to where this man stood. He did not turn at her approach.

"Milton," she said softly, "I am so sorry for you! I wish I could help you."

"Don't pity me!" He wheeled about sharply and caught her hand in his. "Don't pity me!" he said harshly. "It unnerves me. And I am not to be pitied about—about the matter we have been talking of. I have been sure for days now that Dora does not love me. But that does not hurt me, except that she does not trust me enough to tell me that she is tired of our engagement. We will both be better and happier as mere

friends than as husband and wife." "Oh, Milton!" Cynthia exclaimed. "You are excited and don't know what you are saying!" "Yes," he insisted, "I do. Shall I tell you why we have no right to marry? But—never mind that now! First let me ask a great big favor of you. Will you grant it?" "You know that I will," she answered.

She left his side and went back to her chair. She felt slightly sick and giddy. Milton did not love Dora. Dora did not love Milton. Then, if only Gerald Stewart did not love her—Cynthia.

She pressed her hands tightly together. She must not let her thoughts fly off wildly in this way.

Milton came and stood in front of her. "Cynthia," he said, "the favor I have to ask is this. Talk to Dora and tell her that she must not sacrifice herself for my sake. Make her see what a sin it would be for any woman to marry a man she does not love. Don't say a word about how I feel. All I want is to make her happy. But to marry a man to whom she does not love is a sin, Cynthia. You believe that, don't you?"

She nodded. "Yes," she said very softly. "I believe that, Milton." (To Be Continued)

Advice to the Lovelorn

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX

SHOULD HE HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE?

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX: At the age of 21, a young man several years my senior appeared to be very much in love with me, by every word and action. He often spoke of the happiness that would be ours when we became united in marriage. Suddenly, without any explanation, he married. Four years have passed. In the meantime his wife has died. He writes that he is coming to ask my forgiveness and begs me to give him ever to him. Shall I refuse to see him, or do you think he could be loyal and trustworthy after this?

ANXIOUS. I think you will have to be governed very largely by your feelings toward this man. Do you still care about him? If your affection has stood the test of four years it might be well to give him another chance, though his conduct toward you was reprehensible. Why not assume the attitude that the friendship of four years ago was rather ancient history; allow him to call and find out if he still interests you. Sometimes these old beaux are very much like old gowns. When we see them, after the lapse of years, we wonder how we ever took them seriously. From our present viewpoint they seem queer and antiquated, and we realize that we have been just as well off to have them put away, out of sight.

BRITISH MINE SWEEPER SUNK. London, May 13.—The Navy Department officially announced yesterday that a British mine sweeper had been sunk on May 6. Two officers and thirteen men are missing, presumably drowned.

Real Wheatless Loaf Bread Don't let the family eat so much of it that you haven't any left to eat away. Tell them it is bread and no matter if it has no wheat in it, they are not supposed to eat any more than they need.

Barley and Oat Bread 1 cup milk. 4 tablespoons fat. 4 tablespoons syrup. 2 eggs. 6 teaspoons baking powder. 1 teaspoon salt. 2 cups barley flour. 1 cup ground rolled oats. Nuts or raisins if desired. Add to the milk the melted fat, syrup and slightly beaten eggs. Mix the dry ingredients together and combine with liquid ingredients. Bake as a loaf in a moderately hot oven for one hour or until thoroughly baked.

To prepare ground rolled oats run them through the food chopper. Make narrow loaves. They are easier to cut.

NO ADVANCE IN PRICE PNEUMONIA First call a physician. Then begin hot applications of— **VICK'S VAPORUB** 25c—50c—\$1.00

UZAR FOR CORNS BUNIONS CALLUSES Immediate Relief—25 cents **GORGAS DRUG STORES**

Stimulus to Self-Sacrifice

In an effort to stretch out our remaining slender wheat store to cover the next four and one-half months, the people of America are being asked to reduce their per capita consumption of wheat to not more than one and one-half pounds per week. The response has been amazing.

There are many who can do even better than this. Those who give from plenty are asked to increase the measure of their sacrifice that less may be demanded from those who would have to give from their necessities. Some of the former are gladly denying themselves wheat entirely.

Each day adds its quota to this growing army of American wheat abstainers. "Total Abstinence Clubs" are being formed in some places by those who are ready to pledge their entire wheat ration to the allies.

In one western state both merchants and consumers are offering stocks of flour to the government, some cities retaining only two pounds per month per capita.

A large proportion of all the parishes in Louisiana have agreed to use no wheat until the new crop comes in. One church congregation has adopted resolutions pledging the entire congregation to consume not more than three pounds per person per month.

Prominent clubs throughout the country, both men and women's clubs, have held patriotic meetings

pledging themselves to abstain from wheat until after the next harvest. The state of Texas almost as a whole has gone on a wheatless basis from April 15 until June 1, or longer.

This patriotic response from all directions shows the spirit of sacrifice that will lift the ideals of the country and that is bound to give us final victory.

PARIS HONORS JOAN OF ARC

Paris, May 13.—The celebration of the fete day of Joan of Arc was carried out with unusual fervor, notwithstanding the rain that was falling. There was no formal procession and no speeches, but groups of people, carrying flags, deposited wreaths on the bases of monuments erected

to the memory of Joan of Arc. The statue of Joan of Arc outside the Rheims Cathedral, which has been somewhat damaged by the German shell fire, is now being removed to a place of safety.

CRIMINAL SURRENDERS

Trenton, N. J., May 13.—James Johnson, reputed to be one of the most desperate criminals ever sent to the state prison here, who escaped from the criminal building of the New Jersey State Hospital for the Insane, surrendered to County Detective Elmer Hann, of Hunterdon county and a posse yesterday after a fusillade had been fired at the fugitive in a woods about four miles above Flemington where he was hiding.