

Reading for Women and all the Family

"When a Girl Marries"

By ANN LISLE
A New, Romantic Serial Dealing With the Absorbing Problem of a Girl Wife

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It was only eight when I awoke. Stealing on tip-toe to the big, old-fashioned bath that opened off our bedroom, I dressed and hurried downstairs. I couldn't bear to waste a single moment in the wonderful old Harrison homestead. The day before, with all our dear friends, it had been beautiful; but for the real essence of the place I felt I wanted an hour alone.

At half-past nine I'd go back and wake Jim, so we could drive to the station to meet the ten-forty, on which Pat was due. In the meantime I wanted just to breathe the sweet, clear air of the wonderful old estate.

We had this one day left us. Then, unless Jim and I could dissuade him, Pat was to start on his "long journey." And when he would make of the dear old home I didn't know. But this I knew—Pat could never make a home with me in less than the two days of happiness he had given me.

As I came down to the living-room floor I had a queer sensation of being in a place where folks lived. There was none of the mustiness and decay in the air one generally finds in a house that has been shut up for a long time. There was a homey air that our one day of occupancy seemed hardly enough to produce. I expected to stumble over a bit of sewing or a book flung down open where someone had just left it.

Of course I didn't, and, laughing at myself, I went out to the veranda and gazed over the beautiful lawn that had been a mass of decay when I first saw it a few months ago. The paths were carefully raked now, the vines green and blooming, the grass like a carpet of velvet, the flower beds a blaze of color. How Pat had loved it. How he had put his heart and soul into making it beautiful for the woman who scorned him and his old homestead as well and found her joy in chasing about with an insincere flirt like Sheldon Booth!

I vowed then that Jim and I must find a way of making it up to Pat somehow. And after that I went up to wake my boy.

"Don't go down and leave me," Jim protested as I started to go downstairs again. "Val brought out some wonderful servants—one is that Bertha who was with us for so long. Breakfast will be on the lot of ten, and we'll have time for a bite before we go to meet Pat. Wait on the little balcony for your Romeo, won't you, Juliet?"

"As if I could refuse you any—"

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