

The Bridge Party

By JANE LUDLUM LEE

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OME along, Emily, we promised to go over early and help Kate fix the tables for the club meeting this afternoon, and you know how she always leaves everything for the last minute.

"I'll be down in a jiffy, Flora, but such luck as I am having. One side of my hair is as straight as a poker and the other I have burned off with the curling irons. This talk about it being a woman's duty to make herself as beautiful as possible don't go in the summer time."

Emily appeared in a few minutes, adding the finishing touches to her toilet.

"You see this skirt? Well, it don't meet by four inches. I have been taking that obesity cure for the past month and I'll wager I've gained a pound a day—that's why I have tied this pink ribbon around my 35-inch waistline. But what do I care for that crowd? Come, let's hurry along."

They hurried down the dusty country road until they reached the outskirts of the village and soon came to a little cottage with rose bushes rambling over every shutter on the lower floor. They turned into the path that led to the house, but no sign of life was seen or heard. It was one of those still, sultry afternoons in August when even the singing of the robins seems to jar on the quiet of the atmosphere.

"Looks more like a funeral to me than a party," remarked Emily. "Where do you suppose Kate is?"

They rang the bell, rang it again, and still no answer. They looked at each other and then rang again a third time.

"I'll go round to the back door," said Flora; "they must all be in the kitchen."

And then in a few moments Flora's voice could be heard calling.

"Emily—Emily, come on around—here she is."

"Oh, girls," exclaimed Kate, "I'm so glad you came. I'm fussed to death. Mother's gone to the missionary meeting, and the hired man cut his

hair this morning."

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