

**The Blue Cape and Cupid**

By ROSE MEREDITH

ELIZABETH viewed the blue wrap with some disfavor. It had been bought weeks ago, when her engagement to Billy Drake had been the newest and the most wonderful thing in the world, and the long silken fringe which bordered the white sleeves had persuaded her to decide upon the garment. Billy had admired its graceful lines—he had played with the fringe as he talked of their glorious future together—they had laughed like children over the various things that the fringes ensnared, autumn leaves, wisps of flying paper, once a downy feather from some passing bird. And then, afterward, when a foolish misunderstanding had clouded everything, Elizabeth had pulled off her ring—his ring—and dropped it into his reluctant hand. The ring fell and, dropping, the delicate setting, caught on the wretched fringe! He had laughed grimly as he set about its dislodgement.

"I hate the old thing!" she half sobbed, as she brought it from the wardrobe and tossed it about her shoulders. The day was cold and her suit was rather light in weight for the advancing season.

Outside, the wind was moaning among the bare branches, and as she walked briskly toward the trolley car the heart of the little music teacher felt bleak and bare.

As the car moved on, Elizabeth thought of the uninteresting girl she was going to teach—Annie Smith, a child who had insisted upon learning to play "Hearts and Flowers"—and there had been many, many lessons, but Annie still stumbled over the same passages until Elizabeth was ready to cry with vexation. Today, Annie was more exasperating than usual.

To her own surprise Elizabeth comforted the child—for awhile she forgot her own loneliness and pain, while she brought a smile to wet blue eyes and sullen lips. "Let us try again," she suggested gently, and to their mutual surprise they had tried again and conquered. It was a glad little face that was lifted to Elizabeth's sad one, when the hour was ended.

"You have made me glad again," smiled Annie Smith.

Elizabeth thought of those words as she waited for the car that was to take her home. Would anything ever make her glad again? Never could she be glad again without Billy Drake. She brushed away hot tears and entered the car. Some one moved along to make room for her, a strong hand steadied her as the car lurched.

"Thank you," she turned and smiled mechanically at Billy Drake, resuming his seat beside her! The wrap settled innocently about her slender form. Billy was replacing his hat, and, with a dear familiar gesture, was quite unconsciously smoothing the back of his sleek head. She saw it all—she knew it—she felt him so near, and all the while she sat straight and small, looking straight ahead.

The flat-wheel car clattered merrily on its way and Elizabeth noted with a heartick pang that they were near Queen street, her stopping place.

"Queen!" bellowed the conductor as the car rocked to a standstill.

Elizabeth arose, swept the folds of her blue wrap about her and started for the door. She felt a sickening tug at the long fringe of her right sleeve. She would not look around. A wave of pink colored her face as she felt a slight weight on her sleeve—what was the wretched fringe doing now?

"Step lively, there!" sang out the motorman jovially, as the car rocked away on its flat-wheeled career.

Elizabeth whirled around and confronted Billy Drake's amused and, at the same time, apologetic smile.

"I am sorry, Eliz—Miss Russell—I couldn't help it, you can see that—"

"Help what?" she asked frostily.

At the same instant she looked down and saw—the fringe of her right sleeve wound impishly around one of the buttons of his overcoat.

"I didn't expect to get off here," he apologized; "I was going on to King street—"

"I am very sorry," she said stiffly, and then in a sudden burst of vexation she added, "Why didn't you cut it off? Break it off. Now it's a wretched thing!"

He stood helplessly watching her stormy little face. His stern face softened. How unhappy they both were! How like children, breaking precious hours of their lives with silly misunderstandings.

Elizabeth gave one last tug and the threads snapped. The sudden release caused her to waver uncertainly. Billy's hand supported her—lingered on her arm—stayed there, boldly, as of old.

"I don't want to be set free," he said uncertainly, and Elizabeth, looking up, saw that his pleasant face was white with white.

So they walked along Queen street as they had walked before the blue wrap had entered their lives. Billy Drake explained and Elizabeth listened and murmured soft little answers, and they lingered in the tiny living room, where a fire whispered on the hearth. When Billy went home he went whistling down the street in the old happy way, and Elizabeth was dropping a kiss on the precious ring on her third finger. As the blue wrap was hung away in the wardrobe Elizabeth gave it a little tug.

"You blessed old peacemaker!" she whispered.

**The Country Girl and Boy**

By MARGARET M. LUKES

KATHLEEN HIGGINS ran down the hall of the flat into her room and stood there in the dark for a breathless moment before she struck a match. Then in the sudden glare of gaslight her eyes darted to the bureau. They traveled furtively to the little table in the center of the room.

There was no letter. It was three days now.

She looked in the mirror and suddenly a great hate for herself and her cheap prettiness arose in her. There she stood like a little blonde doll, frizzled hair, flashy clothes, painted lips. And what did it get her? Not even an invitation to the White Palace Friday night. The angry look slowly faded from Kathleen's eyes and something like pain took its place. Charlie Hayes was getting tired of her. Some one who got more than \$20 a week pounding a typewriter, some one who could spend more money on clothes than she could had won him.

In their weariness her eyes caught the eyes of her mother looking sweetly at her from out the frame on the bureau. Her lips trembled. All the things she had thrown away to come to the city six months ago, the town home she had been ashamed to tell big, handsome, stylish Charlie Hayes about, suddenly became dear to her.

It was two days later that Kathleen on the shabby station platform at Frackville rushed pell mell into the arms of her mother. She had let them know. She had wanted just this, dad trying to tell her about the big new Giant Tire company plant, hadn't she read it in the city papers? Jack jumping up and down at her side yelling about his skates. And mother!

"For good, dear, you've come," she said, "not just a visit!"

"Nope, mummy, for good," Kathleen answered as they bundled her into a little car which was an acquisition since her departure. "Come home to make pies for daddy, and, say, daddy, can I learn to run this thing?"

"You bet your life you can, but your mother's going to keep you mighty busy for the next few days, signed you up for the fair. Can I tell her she's there? . . . All right, here goes, sis; they've signed you up for the 'Sweetheart Booth.'"

And that evening after the piping hot biscuits and fricassee chicken and the cheery conversation in the cozy kitchen they whisked her off to a committee meeting of the fair. What fun it was to say hello to everybody again!

But up in her little white curtained room that night Kathleen stood for a long while in the moonlight and looked out the window. To say you are going to forget is one thing; to forget itself, another.

Now came three wild, flurried days of cake baking, crepe paper twisting and goodness only knows what. Then at last the night of the fair itself.

The "Sweetheart Booth," needless to say, was the center of attraction. Here eager-eyed girls in bright colored dresses stood ready to be "bought" for dances. One white dress stood out in contrast to the others. It was Kathleen's. "I'm tired of colors," she told her mother, and brought forth a ruffly summer thing. Her pretty golden hair was combed softly about her forehead. With her cheeks just softly pink as she whirled in the arms of one partner after another she was very lovely indeed.

Nobody noticed when, at ten o'clock, Kathleen threw her white wrap scarf over her shoulders and slipped quietly out of the side door. That "sweetheart booth!" Boys and girls looking into each other's eyes. She could not stand it any longer. She made her way slowly down to the orchard where she played when she was a little girl.

All at once she realized some one else was there. Some one tall, with his hands in his pockets, was walking slowly in her direction. Kathleen stood stock still. Her heart turned a somersault. Was she dreaming this? There in the moonlight Charlie Hayes took the last steps toward her.

"Kathleen!" he cried as though he, too, were seeing a vision. "What are you doing here—out in the country?"

"It's where I live, Charlie," she answered in a strained little voice. "I only pretended I was a city girl—I lied." Kathleen was deeply ashamed. Then, "But, Charlie, what, what are you doing here?"

"Wearing out my heart for you," he said in boyish, even tones, "I ran away from you because I was broke. I was always afraid to stop taking you to places because I was afraid I'd lose you. Then I found out I couldn't keep it up any longer. I had to forget about you. You were out of my class. I couldn't even say good-bye. I read about this new Giant Tire company in the paper, and that's where I am now. A bunch of the fellows came over to this stunt tonight. I took a look in. Everybody was too happy—I just couldn't stay. And that sweetheart booth—"

"That's where I was—at the sweetheart booth." She was like a fairy there in the old orchard. "It's where you buy sweethearts."

He stood there looking at her mutely. "Do you have to go inside to buy one?" he asked huskily. But he did not wait for his answer. "Right in his arms she heard him choke forth his love and then his own confession."

"I was a country boy, honey. I lied, too—led to try to win you."

**They Landed a Fat Commission**

By LILLIAN M. MITCHELL

JOHN BAINBRIDGE was gulping the last drop of coffee at the breakfast table with one eye on his watch, which was propped up before him, and one eye on the boarder who sat across the table. He did not want to be late again, for old Manson was getting grouchy of late. When the waitress came in and said that Mr. Manson was on the telephone and wished to speak to Mr. Bainbridge, John fairly gasped.

"There are half a dozen agents out there right on the ground to show this fellow the place," he heard Manson saying. "Nevertheless, I think that we should be represented. I'll leave the car at the corner and go downtown the rest of the way on the 'L.' You skip out there and hang around. If we could make the sale it would mean a fat commission for you, Bainbridge. Go to it. Get it!"

Bainbridge thought of the fine day in the country where he was going. He wished that he knew some charming girl to take with him, somebody who loved the smell of clean, fresh country air.

He stopped before the Adams house and Eloise herself answered the door. She blushed scarlet when she saw him and asked him to step inside. "I got up late," she began apologetically, "and I haven't had a chance yet to—"

"Oh, well, never mind," John Bainbridge cut in; "I had to drive out to the country and I thought—" he eyed her soiled frock distastefully.

"If you'd phoned," she began, "but now it would take me a half hour—"

At Anna Compton's the maid answered the door, a saucy maid, who did not trouble to go upstairs, but called up that a gentleman wanted to see Miss Anna. He heard Anna's voice, now more on the querulous order than the litting, laughter-loving voice that he knew.

"That doorbell wakened me! Send him away; he's probably a man wanting to sell something!"

It was an almost dazed young John Bainbridge who again stepped into the sedan belonging to the Acme Realty corporation. The time was fleeting and he must start out for the long drive that was ahead of him. He could not risk being late, and yet it seemed a pity to take such a good drive alone when some one else might as well enjoy it, too. He saw a few familiar houses and remembered, Mary O'Brien lived along here in one of these houses. He saw the very house now and undecidably drew up at the big white stone in front that pointed out the fact that they had once had enough "carriage company" to use a black.

Here again the girl of the house answered the door—Mary O'Brien herself. Her hair was smooth and prettily dressed and her shoes were well polished. Her apron, though, was a mass of blue and yellow streaks.

"Hello, Jackie!" she greeted with a wide smile. "Thought you never were going to come around any more. Come on in."

"I can't," he temporized. "I stopped just for a minute. You see, I'm going to take a long drive out into the country to try to sell a wealthy commercial artist a gentleman's country place and I had room in the car and thought maybe you'd like to drive along."

Her eyes danced. "I'd love to!" "But," he went on evenly, "I-I thought maybe you'd be dressed enough to go."

But Mary was already tugging at her apron that covered her head and to him. "The kitchen needed painting and I thought that Mary O'Brien house artist, might as well do the job. But I'm all dressed. Just let me get a hat and cover the paint jar so it won't dry up."

She now had the apron off and a neat dark blue frock was revealed.

And all the way out to the town where the wealthy commercial artist lived, or rather was stopping at the hotel, Mary O'Brien told him of all that had happened since she had last seen him, and John Bainbridge found himself laughing as he had not laughed for months. She sat in the back of the car while he drove the prospect about, and when the house was shown Mary made several suggestions as to what might be accomplished here and there with a little paint.

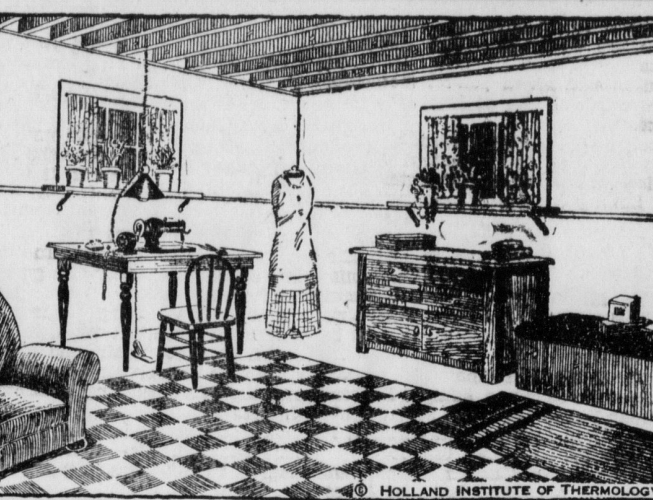
"You'll have to take half the money," Bainbridge told Mary. She laughed and shook her head.

"But I never would have sold him alone!" expostulated John. "He liked the way you told him to fix up that solarium and the little room off the study." He said I had a fine little wife," he ended wistfully. "Mary, why not—"

"I told mother I'd be home for lunch," said Mary, her eyes straight ahead and her cheeks very pink.

"And the commission is enough on that one piece alone to get our furniture," said John Bainbridge his eyes on the narrow strip of road ahead. "Wasn't it lucky, Mary, that you were dressed and ready?" And he smiled as he thought of Eloise and Anna.

**Basement Is Place for Sewing Room**



A SEWING ROOM in the basement is an ideal arrangement because it does not take up valuable space upstairs and is, if anything, even handier than a second-floor location. Such a room may be made light, warm, attractive and convenient. Also, it is close to the laundry where the ironing board and iron may be kept ready for pressing without interruption of the seamstress' work.

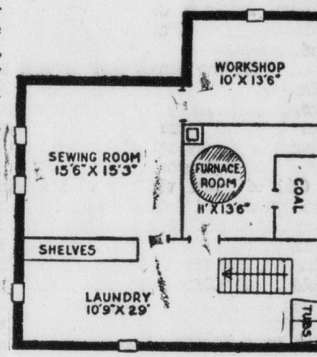
An excellent basement layout, conforming to an actual house plan, is shown here. The Holland warm air furnace is placed near the center of the house. The coal bins are close to it and on the driveway side, convenient for filling. The laundry tubs are beneath the plumbing upstairs. Note the amount of storage space for wood, garden tools and preserves.

All these several features are possible in the average basement if a warm air heating plant of modern type is installed. The latest model of Holland furnace is one which embodies a new invention, a fan unit which moves the air at a much higher velocity than the force of gravity, which is the propelling force in the old-style heater.

This style of heating plant is designed attractively and finished in red and black—a far cry from the unsightly appearance of the ordinary dwelling-house heater. Furthermore, its overall dimensions are less than the space occupied by the ordinary warm air furnace and its intake pipe. For this reason, such a plant will allow ample room for all the basement accommodations shown here without any difficulty.

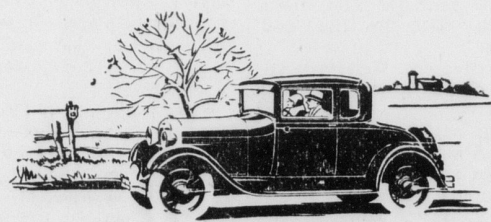
The sewing room is partitioned off with either matched lumber or wallboard. It will be more attractive if the masonry walls are painted and floor joists above are covered with wallboard. A fine treatment for the floor would be battlement inoleum, cemented down and varnished. Or a thick rug might be put down. But if these things are too costly, it might be well to use inexpensive rag rugs of attractive light colors. A heat lead from the furnace to the sewing room will supply ample heat to keep it comfortable, and in the summer it probably will be one of the coolest rooms in the house.

By all means build in a set of shelves to hold the boxes and baskets of sewing materials. An old chest of drawers, enameled in an attractive color, makes a splendid piece of sewing room furniture.



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