

Beggars Can Choose

Margaret Weymouth Jackson

WNU Service
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THE STORY

Renewing a childhood attachment, Ernestine Briceland, of a wealthy family, attracted by Will Todd, newspaper artist, son of a carpenter. They lunch together and recall their school days. Ernestine's sister, Lillian, knowing their father would disapprove, urges her to end the affair, but Ernestine refuses. The love-making progresses rapidly. They make a runaway marriage. Briceland is furious, but helpless, as Ernestine is of age. Loring Hamilton, lawyer, wins Lillian's consent to be his wife.

CHAPTER III

Strange Country

It seemed a natural thing to Ernestine, however it seemed to others, to waken on her marriage morning, in the little back bedroom of the tiny house where the Todds had lived all their married life. She was instantly wide awake and oriented. Perhaps it was the close tangle of Will's arms about her that made everything so real. Perhaps the delicious consciousness of new happiness had never entirely been lost in sleep. It did not matter at all about the family now. Thinking of everything, Ernestine felt in her heart something new about Will. Added to her romantic love for him was something really more wonderful: a sound thing—respect. He had behaved admirably.



"You Are Lovely," He Protested as Though She Had Denied It.

She was filled with a transport of tenderness, a strong conviction of having done well. Now, at last, life had begun for her. The chrysalis of girlhood was broken, and she was emerged into womanhood. She had become real. Always now, Will would be here beside her at the beginning of every day. Gravelly she considered this, and sent up a wordless prayer that she might be a good wife.

Some one was moving about in the kitchen, and she heard the rattle of coils in the kitchen grate. How close and small the house was. Each sound came through the thin walls distinctly. Ernestine realized that she would have to close the window, and she essayed to rise. But at the first movement Will's arms tightened about her, though he did not waken. Ernestine extricated herself and got up with a swift strong movement.

"You have to work today, Will," she said in such a wifely tone that he laughed and looked up at her adoringly.

"I suppose now I've got somebody even worse than my mother about making me get up," he said, and then added, "Hey, wait, I'll get you some warm water." For Ernestine was washing her face in the basin that stood on a small washstand near the door.

But the water out of the pitcher, which had stood all night with the cold wind blowing through the open window upon it, was cold and invigorating.

Will shaved in the kitchen, and Ernestine could hear his voice, in an affectionate murmur, talking to some one. Before the small wavy mirror, she applied her make-up, looking at herself sharply. She arranged her sleek soft hair, proud of its thickness and texture. What was there in her face? Was she different this morning? She must not be different. She powdered again, and rubbed some of the scarlet off her lips, which were as red as cherries under the lip salve.

She made the bed neatly and set the room in order, packed up her belongings. The smell of coffee and the sound of the percolator made her feel faint. She had eaten nothing the evening before.

In the kitchen, Will's face turned on her, as bright as a triangular mirror with the sun on it. His mother was sitting by the kitchen table, with a warm shawl over her heavy dress. She could be up at times, and this morning she had made the effort. Ernestine went to Will's mother, and kissed her.

"I hope you didn't get up on our account, mother," she said gently, "but I'm glad you are better."

The woman looked up at Ernestine, her faded eyes, under the drooping brows, regarding this strange bird that had slipped so easily into her nest. How old she looked, thought Ernestine. She was a generation beyond mamma, for she was old with a gentle humility and meekness that Ernestine had never met before. There was not in her even the stubbornness that sometimes the meek can use so effectively.

Will's father Ernestine could understand. A carpenter, with a gift for woodcutting, he was a skilled and able workman and had a great pride in his trade. He was a tall, thin, stooped man, with a clean-shaven, heavily furrowed face and brightly saturnine, black eyes, which regarded Ernestine with a kind of grim humor. He made her realize without saying so, that he disapproved of their marriage as much as her people did, but that he was not the man to cry over spilled milk. They could count on his kindness.

At breakfast in the bright kitchen, Ernestine and Will made plans. "You are welcome to stay here as long as you like," said Peter Todd, but the two shook their heads. They had already decided to be independent at once.

"We might just as well go today, and find a place to board until we can get an apartment," said Ernestine, looking very young and earnest. "I'll get my trunk from mamma's, as soon as we have found a residence. It's

had driven her into marriage had not all been romantic. In adjusting herself to living on Will's pay, she was able to exercise some of her native ingenuity and shrewdness, and in that capacity she found a certain pleasure. It was fun to put herself on a basis of having no money to spend and then discovering how much she had grown accustomed to spending in the months since she had left school. Her trunk was full of pretty clothes. It was an element she did not at first appreciate.

CHAPTER IV

A Party at Pastano's

Mr. Poole was having a party for Ernestine and Will, and, according to prearrangement, Ernestine slipped downstairs ahead of time to show herself to Mrs. Bennett. She could not help but be proud of the evening dress mamma had given her for Christmas, and which she had not worn before. The yellow chiffon lay about her slender limbs delicately, subtly. She appreciated the illusive cobwebby hose that had come with the dress and the gold cloth slippers. The string of small real pearls which had come to her from her grandmother Langley's estate, the pearl ring which daddy had given her to match her necklace, were the last touches of a perfect toilet. Will had appreciated her, this evening, his fine eyes glowing with admiration.

"You are lovely," he protested, as though she had denied it, and she swung herself about in the narrow room and gave him a languishing, mocking look. But she went down the carpeted stairs in a glow, her squirrel coat over her arm.

Mrs. Bennett got up with an admiring exclamation when Ernestine closed the door behind her. The latter advanced to the center of the room and pivoted on her toes. A little, round, weary body, with tired eyes beneath a fringe of gray hair, Mrs. Bennett had long outgrown personal egotism and was generous with praise and sympathy.

"Youth is the time to live, darling," she said to Ernestine. "My life is an old story, but you are young and glowing, and things are happening to you. It is better for you to have your hard times now, and grow old rich and strong, than to have the hardships in old age, as I have had them. But tell me, aren't you excited to be having a birthday party given in your honor by a great cartoonist?"

Ernestine laughed. "He only wants to be nice to Will. He thinks it will please Will, and of course it does."

Mrs. Bennett maintained a discreet silence, and Ernestine turned to the mirror over a chest of drawers and looked at her reflection, running her hands over her sleek soft hair. She was a little thinner than she had been when she was married, and her eyes were big and dark in the delicate whiteness of her face. She was lovely with a breath-taking quality, her face shining with an inner spiritual excitement. It seemed to her as she stared that she looked too happy, too thrilled for every-day use. She must learn to dissemble.

"Sometimes, darling," Mrs. Bennett chided Ernestine gently, "I think you fail to realize what an effect you have on the people here—on the men. You are so different from the other girls these boys know. You bloom. You wear the face of love. It's hard on them. I want you to be very wise with Mr. Poole. It would be an easy thing for you to disrupt his friendship with Will. Will admires him, and his patronage means so much, just now."

"Will won't be jealous of any attention I pay to Mr. Poole, or that he pays to me," Ernestine said indifferently, "if that's what you mean. It won't hurt Mr. Poole to admire me. He's a nice old man, and he loves to admire women, and men, too, as far as that goes. It's part of his big heart, Will says. Anyhow, Will wouldn't be jealous of me—now." Her small face was so shining that Mrs. Bennett threw her advising instinct away with a gesture and came and kissed her young friend.

"Have a lovely time, darling. Pastano's has the distinction of being the very toughest place in all Chicago. It is beautiful, and not so dangerous as Mr. Pastano likes people to think. He is really very careful about the police. And then, too, you will be with Mr. Poole, who is a close friend of Ruby."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Hand in hand they ran up the stone stairs and met a small plump woman, called Mrs. Bennett, with whom Will discussed rooms and prices, while Ernestine stood to one side, burningly conscious of the gold band on her third finger.

Ernestine was too good a sport to bemoan their conspicuous lack of money. Fresh from the rigors of a fine school, it was not hard for her to acquiesce herself to simplicity. Will discovered that she had a most practical nature. The forces which

good-by. She felt that there were tears in the air, realized a little that these people were losing Will more definitely than she would ever be lost to her family. He was their only son, but they said good-by to him with quiet dignity. Ernestine admired their restraint, and was grateful for their good taste. They offered neither advice nor counsel, but allowed the young ones to go forth about their own affairs. The house on Erie street brought to Ernestine her first shock of reality. It was an ancient, smoke-blackened dwelling place, not far from the lake. Across the street from the house a five-story machine shop reverberated with activity. A secret-looking brown-stone house, with drawn blinds, stood on the corner. Ernestine felt that the apartment they spoke of so glibly was not so near. A sense of the irrevocable nature of the step she had taken swept over her. She was now Will's, and, as he had said to her father, his roof was her roof. His home was hers, and this was it. She had definitely abandoned her old way of life and set her feet in a strange country. The future was as remote from the past as though she were following him to a great distance.

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LOSS BY POOR DISTRIBUTION

By DR. STEPHEN I. MILLER, Credit Men's Association.

INEFFICIENT distribution has cost the people of the United States enough since the war to pay off the national debt. Bankruptcies have caused a loss of over five billions of dollars in the last decade, and that represents only part of the waste of inefficient distribution. Retail stores have multiplied by thousands, and the average life of these stores has been short. There has been a constant stream of men bringing their small savings to the altar of merchandising ambition. Without a knowledge of accounts, buying, advertising, mark-up, turnover, credits, collections and service to customers, they have cut down the average volume of business per store, thereby increasing costs of distribution and prices to consumers. Handicapped by the lack of business understanding and strangled by competition they have constituted an unbroken business death march.

Into this scene of merchandising desolation and chaos has come the chain store, quickening competition, hastening elimination. The competition of chain stores has undoubtedly hurried many a retailer into bankruptcy. On the other hand, the chains have introduced far-reaching economics, stimulated adaptation and brought about greater co-operation between wholesaler and retailer.

Retailing is essentially a service. The merchant is a host, the customer a guest. Success in a store depends upon consideration of detail and a human equation closely bound up with ownership. The large scale farmer has never put the small farmer out of business. I predict a profitable future for both the farmer and the independent retailer who observe the economies of the day.

FARMERS AFFECTED BY WAR

By GEORGE E. ROBERTS, President N. Y. National City Bank.

Instead of attempting to provide relief to farmers who cannot produce wheat and cotton as cheaply as can farmers in other states making use of machinery especially adapted to that region, the cheaper production costs should be accepted as a development on the whole contributing to the general welfare and the necessary adjustments should be made elsewhere.

The farm problem as existing today had its origin in the World War. The war caused derangement of production and trade which are factors of disturbance today. Western Europe had been accustomed to rely upon Russia for large supplies of foodstuffs, and the cutting off of these supplies, together with the devastation of much of Europe by the armies, gave a great stimulus to farm production outside of Europe. Now Europe is back in full production and an overproduction of farm products exists in the world, and a problem of farm relief exists in every country. Moreover, along with the expansion of agriculture in other countries came the discovery that wheat and cotton can be grown in the region which in my school days was marked in the geographies as the Great American desert, and that by the use of machinery especially adapted to that region they can be grown more cheaply than in the older wheat and cotton states. That discovery has had serious consequences to the farmers of these older states.

Education begins in the home and the training most important to a nation or civilization depends upon the proper technique of parenthood. Parenthood brings with it much responsibility and as much importance as business. The father must realize this and lend his co-operation to the spirit of home and life.

The whole family, in my opinion, should plan together, play together and progress together. The result would be much less crime and unhappiness.

We find ourselves forgetful of the finer human touches, human sympathies and human interests, while the objective world of action and achievement lures us on.

Really, the telegram and mail can wait until our children have received and welcomed us. They are material things which will not change after a little time.

But these children, these human personalities, have interests and feelings which normally are at their height when we come home.

Coldly met, these urges and emotions wane, and, as they weaken, they are not so likely to return so vigorously. The child enthusiasm cannot grow nor can it even live without some human warmth from us to keep it aglow.

WORLD CAN DO WITHOUT WAR

By REV. DR. MINOT SIMONS, New York (Unitarian).

If new wars come a grateful people will honor their saviors, but new wars need not come. War is not necessary to human nature. All the primitive human passions that expressed themselves in blood vengeance and blood feuds, in dueling and in slavery still remain, but these institutions are gone. The human impulses which have led to war are likewise permanent, but they can express themselves in better ways. War can be discarded as a method and human nature can go right along as before.

This message of the social psychologist ought to be proclaimed from the housetops in order that all fatalism about war may be banished from the earth.

WORKING FOR CHILD HEALTH

By R. L. WILBUR, Secretary of the Interior.

There are two general methods of working for the care of the child. One visualizes a great national organization reaching out, spreading its tentacles into every part of the country and telling people what to do. The other visualizes the local forces coming together in a united effort and doing a job in accordance with local possibilities.

I say quite frankly that I belong to what may be called the county seat group—the local crowd—not the national crowd. I have a feeling that we will never develop a real democracy unless we develop it with a local significance and interest.

Girl Hangs Self as Revenge on Jilter

Bekescsaba, Hungary.—As revenge on a man who jilted her, Anna Iorino, a Bekescsaba girl, hanged herself from the balcony of the church in which the unfaithful lover was being married to another girl. Her body and a note explaining her reasons for killing herself were discovered by the wedding guests as they left the church.

BOY SLAYER GETS LIFE IN PRISON

State Spares Youth and Two Chums From Chair.

Elizabeth, N. J.—George Daniecki, fifteen years old, whose life the state sought to take for murder, was spared from death in the electric chair by a jury, but must pass the remainder of his life in prison. With two other youths, neither of whom has reached his majority, Daniecki was convicted of first-degree murder, with a recommendation of mercy. The life sentence was mandatory on Judge Alfred A. Stein, notwithstanding that never in the history of the state had one so young been sent to prison for life. The other boys were William Callagher, twenty, and William Garry, eighteen. All three lived in Elizabeth.

For three hours and twenty minutes the jury deliberated, but the question was not of their guilt. The state had convinced the twelve that the youths beat John Hayden to death with a piece of iron to rob him of \$4.65. What they deliberated on was the question of taking the three lives in return.

The first vote, it was said, showed six for a straight verdict of guilty of first degree murder, and six for a recommendation of mercy.

The defendants stood motionless as the verdict was read. Garry then turned to his mother and shook his head. Callagher's eyes filled as he regarded his eighteen-year-old wife, convulsed with sobs.

"I didn't do it," George Daniecki cried to his parents as he was led away.

Hard labor for the remainder of his life faces him. For almost half of the short span he has passed so far, life has meant little but hard labor. He started working when he was eight years old. He rebelled once and ran away. For a year and a half he was in a state reformatory to repent.

On February 17 Daniecki was riding in a motor car with the other boys. They picked up John Hayden, a mechanic, fifty-eight years old. When he resisted their attempt to rob him they beat him with a life iron and fled to Virginia, taking George's sweetheart, Anna Ossowick along. It was her testimony which largely served to convict the three youths.

Says Husband Hid Her Behind Frosted Glass

New York.—Everett Van Houten, a Garden City (L. I.) real estate operator, was so jealous of his wife, Anna, that he had frosted glass put in the ground floor windows of their home and nailed down the windows, Mrs. Van Houten charged in affidavits asking Justice Mitchell May in Supreme court, Brooklyn, to give her \$100 a week alimony pending trial of her separation suit.

Van Houten, in a cross affidavit, admitted having done so, but asserted it was to prevent his wife from flirting. Mrs. Van Houten denied she had flirted.

"My husband," said Mrs. Van Houten, "is a boss and a bully, who referred to my father, an estimable business man, as a stupid Dutchman and a buzzard."

"My husband is not a believer in the Supreme Being and shares Schopenhauer's views on women. He never permits me or our children to attend church."

Gets Two Years in Jail for Shooting at Mate

Los Angeles.—Because she fired five shots at a wealthy husband who had thrice tried to divorce her and whom she declares denied her necessary sustenance, Mrs. Helen Lois Andrade, sixty-six, has been sentenced to two years in the county jail by Superior Judge Emmet Wilson.

Mrs. Andrade, according to evidence presented at her trial, appeared in the driveway of her husband's palatial home in Beverly Hills last September and after meeting him and seeing his second "wife," Mrs. Judith Lavender Andrade standing in a doorway, drew a gun and opened fire. All of her shots missed.

Sentenced to Church; Fails; Goes to Jail

Columbus Junction, Iowa.—Harley Diller decided that there was a lot of difference between serving a jail sentence and a church sentence. The youth, with several others, was sentenced to go to church every Sunday for a year because he aided his companions in trimming the van dyke of which Mayor Jerry Van Dyke of Fredonia, Iowa, so proudly boasted.

When Diller failed to carry out the church sentence, the judge gave him thirty days in jail.



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