

# The Thirteenth Commandment

By RUPERT HUGHES

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## CLAY'S ORGY OF SPENDING GETS HIM INTO AN EMBARRASSING SITUATION.

**Synopsis.**—Clay Wimbura, a young New Yorker on a visit to Cleveland, meets pretty Daphne Kip, whose brother is in the same office with Clay in Wall street. After a whirlwind courtship they become engaged. Clay buys an engagement ring on credit and returns to New York. Daphne agrees to an early marriage, and after extracting from her money-worried father what she regards as a sufficient sum of money for the purpose she goes to New York with her mother to buy her trousseau.

### CHAPTER V—Continued.

"This is too beautiful to go through so fast," Daphne cried. "It's wonderful. We ought to walk. Promise me we can walk home. It's such a gorgeous night."

"You're crazy, darling," he said. "I've got to get to my office tomorrow, and you've got to get home for breakfast."

"All right for you," she pouted. But it was none too serious a tragedy, and their spirits revived when the taxicab turned in through the shrubs about the side that had once been the home of Napoleon's brother and had heard the laughter of Theodora Burr and of Gerty Sumner in their primes.

Daphne did not like the table the head waiter led them to. It missed both the breeze and the view.

"Can't we sit over there?" she said.

"I'll see."

The head waiter came reluctantly to his beck. When Clay asked for the table, the answer was curt:

"Sorry, sir; it is reserved."

Clay felt insulted. He whipped out his pocketbook and rebuked the tyrant with a bill. He thought it was a one-dollar bill, but he saw a "5" on it just as the swift and subtle head waiter abstracted it without seeming to. To ask for it back or for change was one of the most impossible things in the world.

Clay made it as easy for his new slave as he could.

"I don't think you understood which table I meant," he said, pointing to the one he had indicated before. "That one."

"Oh, that one!" said the head waiter. "Certainly, sir."

He led the way, beckoning waiters and omnibuses and snapping his fingers.

Clay ordered a supper as chastely perfect as a sonnet. It showed that he had both native ability and education in the art of ordering a meal. He impressed even the head waiter, and that is a triumph. That was Clay's purpose. Also he wanted to preserve his self-respect and the waiter's attention in the face of the supper that was being ordered at the next table. That was well ordered, too, but it was not a sonnet; it was a rhapsody. It was ordered by a man whose guests had not yet arrived. When Clay had dispatched his waiter he whispered to Daphne:

"See that fellow. That's Thomas Patrick Duane, one of the wealthiest business factors in New York. He was crazy about Lella."

"Not Bayard's Lella?"

"Yes. That's really why Bayard got quarrelled so quick. He was afraid Tom Duane would steal her. Nice enough fellow, but too much money!"

Daphne looked at the big man, and caught him looking at her with a fascinated appraisal. She stared him down with a cold self-possession of the American girl who will neither flinch nor flinch. Duane yielded and turned his eyes to Clay, recognized him, and nodded.

"Hello, Wimbura! How ya?"

"Feeling fairly snappy," said Clay.

"Duane showed a willingness to come over and be presented, but Clay kept him off with a look like a pair of pushing hands."

Duane loitered about, waiting for his guests. He looked lonely, Daphne felt a mixture of charity and snobbery in her heart. She whispered to Clay:

"Invite the poor fellow over here till his guests come. I'm dying to be able to tell the people at home that I met the great Duane."

Again Clay shook his head.

"And that you introduced him to me?"

Clay nodded. He beckoned Duane away with hardly more than a motion of the eyebrows. Duane came with a flattering eagerness. He put his hand out to Clay; and Clay, rising, made the presentation.

"You're not related to Bayard Kip, are you?" Duane said, with an amiable frown.

"He's my brother. Why?"

"I owe him a big grudge," said Duane. "He stole his wife from me, just as I was falling madly in love with her. Beautiful girl, your new sister."

"I've never seen her," said Daphne. "Beautiful girl?" he sighed. "Much too good for your brother, infinitely beyond me. Why don't you both move over to my table? Miss Kemble is to be there with her manager. Mighty clever girl—Miss Kemble. Have you seen her new play?"

"We were there tonight," said Daphne. "She's glorious!"

"Come on over and play in our yard, then."

Daphne had never met a famous actress. She was wild to join the group and to know Tom Duane better. But Clay spoke with an icy finality.

"Thanks, old man. We've already ordered." He still stood, and he had not invited Duane to sit down.

Tom Duane looked at Daphne and smiled like a boy rebuked. "All right, I'll go quietly. I know when I'm kicked out. But next time I won't go so easily. Good night."

He put his warm, friendly hand out again to Daphne and to Clay, who nodded him away with an appalling informality, considering how great he was.

Other people came in, some of them plainly sightseers, some of them personages of quality. Everybody seemed happy, clandestine, romantic. This was life as Daphne wanted to live it. But at length she yawned. Her little hand could not conceal the contortion of her features.

"I'm gloriously tired, honey," she confessed, with a lovable intimacy. "It's the most beautiful supper I ever had, but I'm sleepy."

He smiled with indulgent tenderness and said to the waiter, "Check!"

Daphne turned her eyes away decently as the slip of paper on a plate was set at Clay's elbow. But she noted that he started violently as he turned the bill over and met it face to face. He studied it with the grim heroism of one reading a death-warrant. The amount staggered him. He turned pale. He recovered enough to say to the waiter, "You've given me the wrong check."

The waiter shook his head. "Oh, no, sir!"

Clay studied it again. He called for the bill of fare, and studied that. Daphne felt so ashamed that she wanted to leap into the river. Abroad, it is believed that the man who does not audit his restaurant bill is either an American tourist or some other kind of fool. But in Daphne's set it was considered the act of a miser. Clay worked over his check as if it were a trial balance.

"Ah, I thought so," he growled. "The bill of fare says that this Montreal

melon is seventy-five cents a portion. You've charged me three dollars for two portions."

A look of pitying contempt twisted the waiter's smile.

"The melon you ordered, sir, was all out. I served you a French melon instead."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"I deed not theek it mettered to the gentleman."

Clay sniffed. He was not to be quieted by such a sop. He whipped out his pocketbook and laid down every bill in it. He stretched his legs and ransacked his trousers pockets and dropped on the plate every coin he had. He withdrew a dime and waved the heap at the waiter.

It was evident, from the way the waiter snatched the plate from the table, that Clay had not tipped him. In fact, Clay said, "This will be a peson to you."

They stumped down the steps. The

starter said, "Cab, sir?" and made to whistle one up. Clay shook his head and walked on toward the monument of Grant. Daphne followed. They went as humbly as a couple of paupers evicted for the rent.

Daphne was afraid to speak. She saw that Clay was sick with wrath, and she did not know him well enough to be sure how he would take her interference in his thoughts. She trudged along in utter shame.

The worst of her shame was that she was so ashamed of it. Why should she care whether a waiter smiled or frowned? But she did care, infinitely.

Daphne could not pump up any enthusiasm for the scenery. Her lover took no advantage of the serial of arbors and the embracing bowers. He never kissed her, not once.

Daphne ceased to be sorry for Clay and felt sorry for her neglected self. Then she grew angry at herself. Then at him.

At length she said, with ominous sweetness, "Are you going to walk all the way, dear?"

"You said you wanted to, didn't you?" he mumbled, thickly.

"That's so."

She trudged some distance farther—a few blocks it was; it seemed miles. Then she said, "How far is it home—altogether?"

"About three miles and a half."

"Is that all? The heroine of an English novel I've been reading used to dash off five or six miles before breakfast."

Patriotism and pride helped her for a quarter of a mile more. Then she resigned:

"I guess I'm not an English heroine. I don't believe she ever really did it. I'll resign! I'll have to ask you to call me a cab."

"Pretty hard to find an empty one along here at this hour," he said, and urged her on.

"Let's go over that way to the inhabited part of town," she said, "and take a street car or the subway."

And then he stopped and said, with guilty brusquerie, "Have you got your pocketbook with you?"

"No, I left it at home tonight. Why?"

"Daphne, I haven't got a cent!"

"Why, Clay! You poor thing!"

"That's why I was so rough with the waiter. If I'd had the money, do you think I'd have made a row before you about a few little dollars? Never! You see, I didn't expect to go out to Claremont after the theater. The taxi cost more than I expected, and then I gave the head waiter five dollars instead of one. I ordered with care so that it would come out right. But that business about the melon finished me. I just made it. I never was so ashamed in my life. And I had to drag you into it, and now I'm murdering your poor little feet."

"That's the funniest joke I ever heard. Why didn't you tell me before?"

"It's no joke."

"Why, of course it is! You have only to go to your bank tomorrow and draw some more."

He did not answer this. He said nothing at all. She had a terrified feeling that his silence was full of meaning, that his bank account would not respond to his call. She could not ask him to explain the situation. She was afraid that he might.

She marched on doggedly, growling more and more gloomy and decrepit. Her little slippers with their stilted heels pinched and wavered, and every step was a pang.

"Let's go over there and get on a street car, and dare them to put us off," she suggested.

"It's a pay-as-you-enter car," he growled.

The world was a different world now. The drive that had been so tremendously lovely as she sped through it in a taxicab was a pathway in Mojave. She limped through the hideous, hateful, unparadiseable length, and felt that it was a symbol of the life ahead of her. She had counted on escaping from the money limits of her home. She was merely transferring herself from one jail to another.

Her young lover had dazzled her with his heedless courtship, down away with her on motor wings, dipping to earth now and then to sip refreshments at a high cost, and then swooping off with her again.

And now his wings had broken; his gasoline was gone; his motor burnt out; and the rest of the journey was to be the same old trudge.

She had been leaning heavily on Clay's arm. Now she put it away from her in a mixture of pity for him and of self-protection. When he protested, she said:

"I think I'll walk better alone for a while."

So she hobbled and bobbled by herself, he pleading to be allowed to help her. But she kept him away.

And they crept on a little farther, loving each other piteously.

In the course of time they reached the Soldiers' and Sailors' monument, and Daphne sank down at the base of it.

"I can't go any farther," she said, "not if I die of starvation." He sank down at her side. The moon peered at them between the columns and the

cells of the monument, and seemed to tilt its face to one side and smile. A motorcar went by with the silence of a loping panther. Another car passing it threw a calcium light on Tom Duane and his guests and his chauffeur. How gorgeously they sped! If Daphne had had a bit of luck she would be with them, soaring on the pinions of money, instead of hobbling on without it.

Daphne took off her slippers and fondled her poor abused feet as if they were her children. But when she tried to thrust them back into her slippers for a final desperate effort she almost shrieked with the hurt.

"I'll have to go the rest of the way in my stocking feet," she moaned.

"Not if I have to carry you," Clay growled.

Before he had a chance to carry out his resolution a taxicab that had deposited its fares at an apartment house above went bowling by with its flag up.

Clay ran out and howled at it till it stopped, circled round, and drew up by the bride-path. Then he ran to Daphne and bundled her into it, and gave her address to the driver.

"But how are you going to pay him?" she sighed, blissfully, as they shot along. "Not that I care at all."

"I haven't figured that out," said Clay. "I'll drop you at home and then take him to my club and see if I can't borrow from somebody there. If I can't, I'll give him my watch or the fight of his life."

"That's terrible!" Daphne sighed. "To think how much I have cost you!"

"Well, I wanted to give you a good time on your little visit," said Clay, "and it's only two days till my next salary day."

Her heart sank. Her guess was right. His bank account was dry. It had gurgled out in amusing her. She felt that there was something here that would take a bit of thinking about—when she had rested enough to think.

The taxicab swung into Fifty-ninth street and drew up to the curb. Clay helped Daphne out and said to the chauffeur, "Wait!"

He said it with just the tone he had used when he said to the waiter, "Check!"

When Clay had kissed her his seventeenth farewell and was wondering how he could tear himself away from her without bleeding to death, Daphne pressed the bell.

Instead of her drowsy mother opening the door half an inch and fleeing in her curl-papers, Bayard himself appeared in his bathrobe and pajamas.

"Bayard!" Daphne gasped as she sprang for him. "What on earth brought you home so soon?"

"Money gave out," he laughed.

"Hello, Clay," he said as he put forth his hand. "Mother tells me you've been secretly engaged to my sister all this time, you old scoundrel! How are you? What's the good word?"

"Lend me five dollars," said Clay.

### CHAPTER VI.

The meeting of Daphne and her new sister-in-law was not what either would have expected or selected. Daphne was tired in body and soul, discouraged, footsore and dismayed about her love and her lover. She had reached the door of the apartment in the mood of a wave-buffed, outswum castaway, eager for nothing but to lie down in the sand and sleep.

Daphne could imagine the feelings of her brother's wife when she reached her home after a long ocean voyage, a night landing, the custom-house ordeal, and the cab ride among the luggage, and found a mother-in-law asleep in her bed and a sister-in-law yet to arrive!

Bayard and Lella, serene in the belief that Daphne and her mother had gone back to Cleveland, entered the apartment without formality and went about switching on lights, recovering their little home from the night with magic instantaneity.

Mother Kip's awakening came from the light that Bayard flashed in his bedroom. Lella had a lovable disposition, but she was tired, and all the way up in the overloaded cab she had thought longingly of the beautiful bed in her own new home, and had promised herself a quick plunge into it for a long stay. How could she rejoice to find a strange woman there—even though she bore the sacred name of mother-in-law?

Mother Kip ordered Bayard and Lella out of their own room and when she was ready to be seen she had so many apologies to make and accept that the meeting entirely lacked the rapture it should have expressed. Even a mother could hardly be glad to see her son in such discouraging circumstances. All three exchanged questions more and more perfunctorily, and kept repeating themselves. The most popular question was, "I wonder where Daphne is?"

They could not know that she was hobbling down the wilderness of Riverside drive. She, too, was thinking longingly of her bed. But long before she reached it her mother had moved in and established herself across a good deal more than half of it. It was a smallish bed in a smallish bedroom.

Lella fell asleep in her tub and might have drowned without noticing the difference if her yawning husband had not saved her life—and very cleverly: he was too tired to lift her from the water, so he lifted the stopper and let the water escape from her. She almost resented the rescue, but eventually got herself to bed in a pretty sullen stupor.

From some infinite depth of peccati she was dragged up protesting. Bayard was telling her of Daphne's arrival. Doggedly she began to prepare an

elaborate toilet, but Bayard hated her out before she was ready. This was the final test of Lella's patience and of Daphne's.

It was a tribute to both that they hated the collision more than each other. Their greetings were appropriately emotional and noisy, and they both talked at once in a manner that showed a certain congeniality.

When at length Daphne went to her room she observed her mother's extraterritorial holdings. She stretched herself along the narrow coastline in despair of rest. But she was too tired to worry or lie awake and she slept thoroughly.

The next morning the three women, about to meet one another by daylight, made their preparations with the scrupulous anxiety of candidates for presentation at court. In consequence, breakfast was late and the only man there, except the evanescent waiter from the restaurant below, was Bayard.

A troop of business worries like a swarm of gnats had wakened him early. He had escaped some of them in Europe, for the honeymoon had been a prolonged and beatific interlude in his office hours; but marriage was not his career. His career was his work, and that was recalling him, rebuking him, as with far-off bugle alarms.

He was so restless that he merely glanced at the headlines of the paper. He was preoccupied when he kissed



It Was a Tribute to Both That They Hated the Collision More Than Each Other.

his mother and Daphne good morning, and he paced up and down the dining room like a caged leopard till Lella arrived.

Her trousseau had included boudoir gowns of the most ravishing description and she wore her best one to breakfast. Daphne and Mrs. Kip made all the desirable exclamations at the cost and the cut of it. Even Bayard paid her a tribute.

"Isn't she a dream, mother? Aren't you proud of her, Daph?"

They agreed that she was and they were, and Bayard drew his chair up to the table with pride.

It was the bride's last breakfast and the housewife's first. That is, Lella, was not really a housewife; only an apartment wife, with nearly everything done for her except the spending of her time. She had to spend her own time.

This breakfast was the funeral of the honeymoon, and Lella hung with graceful dejection over the coffee cup. It might have been a cup of hemlock, judging from the posture of her woe. But the he-brute, attracted by a portion of a headline, had his newspaper and was gulping it down with his coffee.

He was so absorbed in the mere clash of two Mexican generals and the danger of American intervention that he forgot the all-important demands of love, and ignored the appalling fact that he had only a few minutes left before he must take his departure.

It was a pitiful awakening to the new Mrs. Kip. She was being taught that she was not important enough to keep her husband's mind or his body close at home. He had said that she was all the world to him, and behold! she was only a part of it. He had said that he could think of nothing else and desired nothing else but her. Now he had her and he was thinking of everything else. He had to have a newspaper to tell him all about everything in the world.

The sight of Lella's anguish over the breakfast obsequies of the honeymoon chilled Daphne's hope of marriage bliss like a frost ravelling among peach blossoms.

Every feminine reader of this paper can appreciate the situation in which Daphne found herself when she set out to buy all the pretty things that she felt she should have before becoming Clay's bride. Her limited purse did not fit in at all with the prices that confronted her at every turn. What did she do?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

As He Understood Orders.

"Now," said the medical officer to the raw recruit, "having taken your height and chest measurement, we will try the scales." And the unsophisticated one immediately commenced, "Do, re, mi, fa," etc.

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