

OF INTEREST TO THE WOMEN

A GIRL AND A MAN

A New and Vital Romance of City Life
by Virginia Terhune Van de Water

CHAPTER XXVI
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If Hasbrook Bainbridge had been watching for the psychological moment in which to impress Agnes Morley pleasantly, he could not have chosen a more opportune time than just after she had spoken over the wire to Philip Hale. The lad's formal tone, his failure to say a word that could not have been heard by the world at large piqued her.

So when Mr. Bainbridge approached her with a smile of greeting she felt more kindly toward him than she had ever felt before. He, at least, she reflected, treated her with courtesy and consideration.

"Are you very busy, Miss Morley?" he asked.

She swallowed the lump in her throat caused by Philip's indifference. "No," she replied. "I have nothing special to do until Mr. Hale returns."

His Manner Changes
His manner changed as she spoke. "You are worried," he asked solicitously. "What has happened?"

"Nothing!" she replied, forcing a smile to her lips. "Why did you ask if I was busy?"

"Tell me first if there is anything I can help you about—I mean if you are worried about anything in which I can be of assistance."

She shook her head decidedly. "No—nothing at all," she said.

"You would rather I did not insist upon knowing," he remarked musically. "Well, then, I won't insist. But I have watched your face enough to guess what certain expressions mean and I am sure you are annoyed or unhappy. But you have a right to exclude me from your confidence for you scarcely know me yet. Perhaps some time—"

He stopped. How kind and sympathetic he was, she thought. But she must not let him suspect what was in her mind.

"You came to ask me to do something, Mr. Bainbridge," she reminded him. "What was it?"

A Polite Request
She noted gratefully that he followed her lead at once.

"I thought perhaps you would repeat your former kindness and take down a few letters for me. I am afraid my secretary cannot undertake any more work than she has on hand this afternoon—and I want to get the letters of—"

"I will be glad to help you out," Agnes told him.

"Well, I brought the letters in here," he explained. "Then I will know just when Mr. Hale comes in and will not interfere with his work."

"Yes," Agnes reiterated mentally. This man had, after all, a kind heart. Her first judgment of him had been wrong. Annie Rooney, too, had been prejudiced against him. Annie's opinions were not to be trusted. For instance—what stuff she had talked of Philip Hale!

As on the other occasion of her working for him, Mr. Bainbridge dictated rapidly, but this time she did not fancy he was testing her ability.

She did her best, and the task was soon ended.

"I will transcribe these letters at once," she said, slipping a sheet of paper into her machine.

"Thank you," he returned. "Other girls might have done that job, but few would have done it as cheerfully and as well as you have." He was standing close by her now. "Again, I thank you," he repeated.

Lifting her hand quickly, he pressed it, then dropped it. Once this would have offended her; now it seemed but the impulsive action of a kindly man, older than herself—such a thing as he might have done to a child ten years of age. So she did not show any vexation, but began at once to type the letters.

Ten minutes later Mr. Hale came into his private office. She rose and took up her pad and pencil, but he checked her.

"Wait!" he ordered. "Is that one of Mr. Bainbridge's letters you have there on the machine?"

"Yes, it is," she replied.

"Well, go ahead and get them all done, then."

"This is the last one," she informed him.

Was he annoyed at her having done this work for his partner? His next remark disabused her mind of this idea.

Bainbridge just told me that he had asked you to take some dictation for him, and that you had done it satisfactorily. That was quite right."

A Changed Opinion
His speech confirmed her in her altered opinion of the younger member of the firm. Evidently Mr. Bainbridge had spoken frankly of his request to her. There had been nothing underhanded about his manner of conducting the trifling affair.

As she was drawing the last sheet of paper from the machine, she spoke in a tone that indicated no nervousness or embarrassment.

"Very well," her employer acknowledged his comprehension of the situation. "Thanks. Now take these letters over to Mr. Bainbridge; then come back and get to work."

Miss Durkee glanced up superciliously as Agnes approached.

"Mr. Bainbridge is busy, Miss Morley," she said when the girl paused. "What is it you want?"

"These are some letters I have done for him," Agnes replied. "I will take them in to him."

"Give them to me! I will see that he gets them," Miss Durkee snapped.

"Why need she be so disagreeable?" Agnes wondered. Did she resent the fact that another girl had made her work easier by doing a half dozen letters for her employer?

"Surely, girls in offices were a queer lot!"

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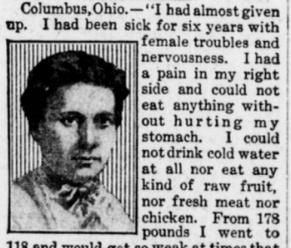
We are to wear a great many silk suits this season as well as these of wool and this is a model that will be found good for both. In the picture, it is made of serge with trimming of broadcloth. The wool materials include velours and poplin and broadcloth as well as the novelties. Silks for Autumn are preferably of the heavier sort and the failles and poplins are favorites. The skirt can be made in two or in three pieces with or without the seam at back. The peplum and body portion of the coat are separate at the back and sides but at the front, they are cut in one.

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SILVER SANDALS

A Detective Story of Mystery, Love and Adventure.

By Clinton H. Stagg.

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(Continued From Yesterday.)

"Monomania," suggested the blind man. "I understand." He did understand the thoughts of the strange old recluse, and of the daughter to whom he was a king who could do no wrong.

"For years he planned, for he understood that the years had changed. He must plot a plan to carry out his scheme. He asked my aunt to help; you can't realize what that cost but it proves the lengths to which he would go to do as he intended. It is in the blood, I think."

Even in his blindness, Colton could see the square, resolute, little chin of the girl beside him, that his hands had touched when he had bathed her face with the reviving cold water. Yes, it was in the blood. She had proved it when she had fought clear of his traps and pitfalls; she was proving it now by telling him the story with which she intended to set at rest suspicion against one she loved.

"He built the silver frame, perfect as it built another. He wanted the biggest, brightest, gayest restaurant for his purpose. The difficulty of carrying out his plan seemed insurmountable then. But his theory was that again he took new tones of quiet, wonderful reverence. 'I guess God sent the one person. He came to our door, hungry. We fed him. He never had seen dead in the restaurant who spoke or thought of almost no one but me, loved him at once. He took an interest in father's work. They were chums. Father learned his name, and he realized when he asked permission to marry me. We, too, had become chums, and more.'

"Bracken" asked the blind man, very quietly.

"Philip Bracken, junior," she answered. "I think he tried to dissuade father from his strange idea, but we were firm."

"It was my father's wish," she said simply. "In the years, as I grew, it had become part of my life; this doing the great good deed which he wanted. Philip set about making the plans to help, then. There was the suite; the one method of having father get to the table. Philip told me his father and he showed Mr. Bracken that the witness was gone. Philip went on one of his father's voyages. There he induced the waiter to leave. Then he began to realize that what he would do was necessary, and I was frightened a little. Six months ago Philip arranged for the help we would need inside the hotel."

"How?" he asked.

"I don't understand it exactly." For the first time since she had begun to tell the story she hesitated.

"He secured the position of assistant manager of the hotel for a man named Norman. He had lived around Poughkeepsie and he used to visit father until—she veered hurriedly. "I never liked him, but he did everything without ever arousing the suspicions of Mr. Carl."

"Father and Philip went to the suite in the afternoon. It was hard to say good-by; it is always hard when a party is to go on a long journey, and you will not see them again for a long, long time." There was just a suspicion of tremble in her voice, but the words came out as if they had been instilled into her mind from the cradle.

"There he waited for the hour that had been named."

"There was no doubt that it would come," put in the blind man, his voice low. "Something inside him forced that question to the problemist's lips, which he did not want to speak of. It seemed incredible almost, that this girl, who was young and beautiful, by all the standards of the seeing world, should have such strange ideas going into the greatest of all mysteries. Was it a great loyalty to the ideas of her father? Was it, too, a monomania? No, not that last. The word was too suggestive to the blind man, whose mental visualization of the girl beside him was more complete than even eyes would have made possible, for that that mental picture saw under the dark sky, behind the wide window and under the hair of burnished gold. It was a religion almost—a sacred belief that had been put into the girl's heart and mind by the father she loved. A strange belief, perhaps, but a strange man of strange blood had given the world this girl."

"There was no doubt," she repeated, and then, as if she had not said a bit of wonder that she could have thoughts of doubt. "Philip was with him, as the plans had been made, and the end came. It was then the three signs on the wall were made—symbolic of the three Egypts of the ancients: Upper and Lower Egypt and the Egypt of the hereafter."

"But you, Sandals, my aunt, and I entered the private dining room, away from the court, without being seen. I watched my opportunity through the palms, and went to the table Philip had ready. Aunt and I cut my realize him. Father had asked me to promise that I would be present at this last scene. I made the promise when Philip and I were married. I did not see either of them in the suite upstairs. My aunt brought him down. The frame worked perfectly; there could be no hitch in that. Philip and my aunt carried out their part without trouble. I thought the waiting captain would upset the carefully arranged plan at first. He tried to, but my aunt and Philip prevented him."

"Then you came to the case. You were right. I didn't know you when Mr. Carl spoke. But there was something in your face, or manner, as you touched the wrist, that frightened me. I broke the wrist, and cut my finger. Then you spoke to your secretary. I knew that he followed me. Philip was waiting at the Waldorf, for he had not overlooked even the slight possibility of my being drawn into the case, and he had taken every means to keep me out. He telephoned my aunt to be ready. Then he went to the car. Philip had borrowed from his father's friend, the district attorney, so that he would be interested in the case, and be in a position to help us

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Poughkeepsie. And we did not dare go near to find it."

"He had it in the suite!" Colton's statement was almost brutally positive. The unfinished words his seeming finger tips had read on the table had been written on the cryptogram itself to show the keen mind of Silver Sandals the key! Colton knew that "Where is your husband?" he demanded.

"I don't know." The words came chokingly, presaging the utter breaking of nerves that had been strong for so long. "He went to Poughkeepsie last night when he had returned the district attorney's car. We have not heard from him!"

Philip Bracken with the same unalterable faith she had given to her father. Had he betrayed that faith, thrown aside the girl who loved him, because she had been merely a tool to get the million dollar's worth of jewels her strange father had secreted?

Across the room a slit of gray showed between the heavy curtain and the window edge. Another dawn was greeting the sleepless blind man in his library. The blind man detected the different "feel" of the light at once. He snapped off the electric at the desk and raised the curtains, to fill the room with the sickly light of the new day. A chill seemed to shake the body of the girl on the couch, but the blind man paid no attention. At the desk he bathed his eyes and forehead with alcohol, and adjusted the tortoise-rimmed, smoked-glass spectacles.

(To Be Continued.)

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