



# Reading for Women and all the Family



## The Four of Hearts

A Serial of Youth and Romance by Virginia Van De Water

CHAPTER LII.  
Edward Van Saun's pale face lighted with pleasure as the nurse ushered Cynthia Long into his room, then went out, closing the door softly, leaving the pair alone.

The convalescent was propped up in bed, his gray hair and mustache shining like silver against the white pillows. Cynthia thought she had never seen him as handsome before. Again he reminded her of her own father.

"Dear Mr. Van Saun!" she exclaimed, kissing the hand he held out to her. "It is good to see you again."

"It is very gracious of you to come to me," he rejoined. "I hope my sudden illness did not interfere with any of your plans. I am more than glad for the sake of you young people that I shall soon be up and about again. It would have been distressing if I had been ill near the date of the wedding. Let me see—the great event is less than a month off now—isn't it?"

Edward Van Saun glanced down at the solitary diamond flashing on her finger. "I hope you are very happy, dear," he said simply.

"Thank you," she murmured. "She could not tell this man that she was dissatisfied. 'Gerald is very kind and good to me,' she added.

"She knew she must say something of this kind. Certainly that was true and safe. But her companion was already thinking his own thoughts. His face wore a pained look, and he eyed her anxiously.

"Dear," he said, "I have wanted to ask you about a matter that is very close to my heart. There is a question which you will forgive me for asking—because I love my boy better than my life. Does Dora love Milton?"

"What could she say? 'I—I—why Mr. Van Saun,' she began, 'how should I—'

An Important Revelation

He stopped her with a gesture. "Wait, until I explain. I am asking this of you because I trust you absolutely. I wish I had a daughter like you. I know you will be honest with me. Since I have been ill I have had much time to think and many opportunities of watching my boy. He is not happy. Do not fancy for a moment that I imagine he does not love Dora. He asked her to marry him. There was no reason for this unless he cared for her. But I can see that something is weighing on his mind. I have wondered if he suspects that she

does not care for him and that he should release her from their engagement."

He paused, but as Cynthia said nothing he went on. "I have urged him to spend his evenings with Dora, as he used to do—but he has said that she is busy with her wedding preparations. I know that those would not fill all his evenings. He tells me that he sees her almost every day on his way home. But if the girl loved him that would not satisfy her.

"Then—forgive me if I seem egotistical—but I think if she looks forward with joy to marrying my son she would be desirous to see his father once in a while. She has not been in to see me for a moment since my illness. Understand, I have not felt hurt on my own account. Why should I? But Milton must have noticed it.

"These are only straws that show which way the wind blows. I would think nothing of them if my boy were happy. But, my dear, he is not."

Cynthia's heart was full of sympathy. Dora had as good as confessed to her that she did not love Milton, yet Cynthia dare not say this. If she were not Dora's cousin and confidante, and did not know Milton, she might feel justified in expressing an opinion. As she thought of Milton's unhappiness she felt a great wave of pity—a pity that startled her by its intensity.

"I am sorry, dear Mr. Van Saun," she faltered. "I wish I could help in some way. But there seems to be nothing that I can do."

"I see, I see," he acknowledged. "You cannot speak frankly about your cousin without betraying any confidence that she may have reposed in you. Yet—it occurred to

## Bringing Up Father



me that perhaps you might try to ascertain from Milton why he is so worried. For, if Dora does not love him, he must not marry her."

A Stern Dictum  
The words were uttered sternly. "I consider a loveless marriage a sin," the speaker continued. "Not all the pretty names that people give it can alter that truth. My son shall not be guilty of making a pure young girl sin. And that is what she would do if she married him without loving him—just because he loves her or because the marriage seems the conventional and convenient thing.

"I used to hope for and anticipate this marriage. Now I see that I may have been party to a great wrong to my old neighbor's little daughter."

He sighed as if weary. "Forgive me, dear," he said, "for burdening you with all my anxieties. But you are young—and life and its fallacies and sophistries have not blinded your eye to the right. Moreover, as I have already said, I trust you. You have been brought up to know what real love is and what it means to sin against it, and, in so doing, scar one's soul. My son's betrothed shall not commit that sin if I can help it—no, not even if my boy's earthly happiness depends upon it."

"I understand," the girl said in a low voice. "And now I must go and let you rest."

"I have ordered tea served for you down in the drawing-room," her host informed her. "Milton came home early this afternoon. I told him you had telephoned that you would call, and that although I wanted you to myself for a little while, he might see you later. You will find him and the tea waiting for you downstairs."

(To Be Continued)

## LIFE'S PROBLEMS ARE DISCUSSED

By MRS. WILSON WOODROW

The outworn idea that you can beat, or force, or drive anybody into doing as you want them to is not the sole monopoly of junkerdom.

It is junkerdom's chief stock in trade, of course, but the supply has not been entirely cornered. We all of us encounter it now and then, either in our own experience or that of some one whom we know.

A young married man of Boston has recently submitted to me in a letter a long account of his matrimonial tribulations, consisting chiefly of a series of complaints against his wife, and has asked me for my advice.

He admits that he has previously sought the counsel of various friends and acquaintances through a hypothetical question in which he having been undergone by someone else. The response in each instance has been, "If I were that fellow I'd kill her," or "I'd beat her," or "I'd hand her a wallop," and other suggestions of similar tenor.

I am not surprised. Nine out of ten persons on hearing his story would unthinkingly prescribe the same heroic remedy. But he himself is evidently in doubt as to its efficacy. Nor is he willing to accept the other horn of the dilemma and leave the woman who he says is making his life miserable.

For one thing, the situation is complicated by the existence of a child, whom he is devotedly attached; and, for another, he is still obviously too much in love with his wife to think of giving her up.

He clings to the dreams of a home in which the three of them reunited, husband, wife and baby, may live happily together ever after.

I have only the picture he draws of his wife to go on. According to him, she is young, somewhat flighty, extremely fond of admiration, demanding constant amusement and excitement—a familiar enough type. She may have these qualities in the exaggerated degree that he intimates, or his representation may be prejudiced. At any rate, she has the encouragement and support of her mother.

Unconsciously, however, he gives between the lines of his letter a much clearer and more definite portrait of himself.

Up to the time of his marriage he says, he had always been an actor. One can see that all his ambitions and hope were centered in his profession. Although scarcely more than a boy—he is only twenty-two—he had advanced rapidly into recognition, and was called upon to support some of the best-known stars in the country. He delighted in the player's life, and again in his letter he reverts to the charm and attraction that it held for him.

Nevertheless, when he was compelled to choose between getting married and the stage, he gave it up. The young woman to whom he was engaged made that a condition of his assent.

Much against his grain, he secured an industrial position in his native town and established himself and his bride in a hotel of his own. The unaccustomed work was hard and irksome to a degree, but he stuck it out and tried to make good.

In the meantime, though, his wife had become discontented. She wanted to return to her own city and friends, and again he yielded. So he secured another situation there, and again manfully did his best for his family, which by this time had been increased by the arrival of the baby.

But among old associations; and with her mother at hand to rely upon for assistance in the household, the young wife neglected more and more her domestic responsibilities to seek continual gaiety and diversion. Even an alarming illness of the baby failed to steady her.

Incessant quarrels and dissensions were the result. Finally the husband, wrought up beyond endurance, flung himself off, and returned to the stage, determined to re-engage with a big New York production; but he could not stand the separation, and throwing up his engagement came back to plead with her.

Let him prove that he can command success, though, let him come to her prosperous and assured, instead of whining at her heels, penniless and shabby, and he will find the tables turned.

He made his first great mistake when at her instance he gave up the stage—the career in which all his interest and enthusiasm were given.

No human being can spoil another's life. We do that only to ourselves, and we do it invariably when we allow the advice, the fears or the disapproval of another to turn us from the special gift or aptitude which is implanted in each one of us, and the development of which is our lifework.

To this young man I should say: Go back to the stage. Work hard. See your soul's own name in electric lights above Broadway's greatest playhouse. And when you have accomplished that—long before, in fact, it will be your wife, not you, who is pleading for a reconciliation, and your dream of "living happy ever after" will come true.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?  
"Look here, waiter," said Mr. Joyce, scowling deeply over his plate. "I ordered turtle soup. There is not even a morsel of turtle flavor in this."

"Of course," said the waiter. "What do you expect? If you ordered cottage pudding, would you expect a cottage in it?"

## Advice to the Lovelorn

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX

DON'T!

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:  
My husband is real good, but it takes all the money he makes for us to scrape along. I don't think he loves me as much as the other man does either. The other man has his own business, an automobile and can give me a nice home.

AN ANXIOUS WIFE.  
A play I saw has set me thinking. I told this man that I was going to leave my husband for him, but now I don't know what to do. He is after me every day to tell him. Has a woman a right to leave her husband if she can better herself?

There ought not to be this "other man." Love is not entering into your calculations—you just want to sell yourself for a few luxuries! If you do, you will not be "bettering yourself," but wrecking your own life. The man who makes love to a married woman, seldom marries her after she gets her "freedom." He breaks up her home, ruins her reputation, steals her husband's happiness—and then throws her over some day, telling her sneeringly that his wife must be a good woman! Why don't you try to help your husband? Why not work at his side and try to make a success. There is a very ugly name for the thing you are contemplating—do you want it applied to you?

DRINK  
DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:  
I am a widower, without children, age 35, and engaged to a lady of 27. Now what troubles me is that I had made appointments with her on two occasions and each time she was not only late but was under the influence of liquor.

L. T.  
Drunkness is a tragic thing—and never more horrible than when it has a woman for its victim. You have no right to give your children a mother who will yield to the madness

of drink. You have equally no right to throw over the woman you love because of her weakness. Try to help her cure herself—make every effort to aid her in conquering this bad habit. But if she is too indifferent or too weak to try to overcome her ugly failing—then you must put her out of your life. But be patient and generous, helpful and kind—that is your part.

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