

Reading for women and all the family

The Four of Hearts

A Serial of Youth and Romance
By Virginia Van De Water

CHAPTER LXVI
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Cynthia Long's father had often told her that the prospect of an ordeal was always more terrifying than the actual facing of it. The girl recalled this statement now as she greeted Gerald Stewart in the library.

Her heart had beaten fast as she descended the stairs from Dora's room. Now she felt strangely calm. The man held out his hands to her, and she laid hers in his grasp. But she did not raise her face for his accustomed kiss. Heretofore she had felt it her duty to do this.

"I am glad to have a chance to talk to you alone, Gerald," she said. "Uncle and aunt are out; Dora has gone to bed with a headache."

The query was so anxious that Cynthia was surprised.

"No, indeed," she replied. "She is tired—and worried."

"I am sorry," he said in a low voice.

He did not ask what Dora was worried about. Cynthia noticed, perhaps he considered it none of his business.

She closed the door before sitting down. "I want to be sure that our conversation is not overheard," she explained.

Her companion looked at her inquiringly. There was an uneasy expression on his face, as if he were afraid that she was going to question him.

"I want to talk to you about myself," she began, "and I must ask you to be very patient with me and to believe that I am saying that which is painful to me, but which I must say because my conscience tells me I must."

Gerald Is Patient
He bowed without speaking. He had seated himself in a Morris chair near her, and now rested his head on his hand, shading his eyes from the light. With her subjective mind, Cynthia wondered why he need proceed to come to live here—so I will not go into all that. Suffice it to say that I had no home. Later, I learned that I had not enough money ever to establish my own home. I was lonely; I was unhappy. You were kind to me. My aunt told me of your unhappiness and loneliness. That awakened my sympathies for you. It was pleasant to have your friendship—for you understood how I felt. Then—Aunt Amanda told me that you cared for me."

The man started slightly, but did not speak.

"You were very good to me,"

Cynthia continued, "I felt like an alien here, in spite of Dora's affection for me. I feared to become a burden. When you asked me to marry you, I said I would."

How was she to go on with the recital? She grasped the arms of her chair tightly and spoke rapidly.

"Gerald, I had no right to accept your love, for I did not love you. I cannot marry you—for I do not love you. Oh!—pressing her hands to her eyes—"It is dreadful to have waited until now to say this. I thought I could continue the deception. But, Gerald, I cannot!"

Her hands were still pressed to her eyes. She was afraid to look up. She heard the man rise. A second later he was bending over her.

"Cynthia, dear child," he was saying. "Don't accuse yourself like this. We will always be friends."

"That is not enough," she murmured. "We should not marry for that. Oh, Gerald—I believe in love."

And the Man Agrees
"I believe in it, too," the man said. There was no sound of pain in his full, rich tones. "Cynthia, look at me. Let me tell you how right I think you are."

An idea smote her, as if a brilliant light was suddenly flashed upon a subject that had been obscure until now. She dropped her hands from her eyes and sprang to her feet, facing him as he stood smiling down at her, very kind and compassionate, but not sad.

"Gerald," she exclaimed breathlessly. "Why, Gerald—you are not in love with me?"

He caught her hands in his. "But

Bringing Up Father



OH! SO GLAD YOU'RE HOME EARLY—I'M AWFULLY AFRAID AND I NEVER SEE A POLICEMAN—

IT'S FUNNY WHERE THOSE COPS KEEP THEMSELVES—I NEVER MEET ONE—

GO DOWN IN THE CELLAR AND SEE IF EVERYTHING IS LOCKED—

I'LL GO ALL THROUGH THE HOUSE!

OH! EXCUSE ME—HAVE YOU MOVED THE POLICE STATION?

HOW DO YOU DO MR. JACKS!

HOME EARLY—EH? WHAT'S THE MATTER—IS DINTY'S CLOSED?

I'LL GIT FIRED FOR THIS!!

"Outwitting the Hun"

By Lieutenant Pat O'Brien
(Copyright, 1918, by Pat Alva O'Brien.)

I went on digging. When the total distance between the live wire and the bottom of the hole I had dug was thirty inches, I took hold of the ground wire and pulled on it with all my strength.

It wouldn't budge.

I was stretched taut across the narrow ditch I had dug—about four inches wide—and all my tugging didn't serve to loosen it.

I was just about to give it up in despair when a staple gave away in the nearest post. This enabled me to pull the wire through the ground a little and I renewed my efforts. After a moment or two I had pulled again until, in a life before, a staple on the next post gave away, and my work became easier. I had more leeway now and pulled again until, in all, eight staples had given way.

Two Inches From Instant Death
Every time a staple gave way it sounded in my ears like the report of a gun, although I supposed it didn't really make very much noise. Nevertheless, each time I would put my ear to the ground to listen for foot working and the perfect still in the dark till he had gone by.

By pulling on the wire I was now able to drag it through the ground enough to place it back from the fence and go on digging.

The deeper I went the harder became the work, because by this time my finger nails were broken and I was nervous—afraid every moment that I would touch the charged wire.

I kept at it, however, with my mind constantly on the hole I was digging and the liberty which was almost within my reach.

Finally I figured that I had enough space to crawl through and still leave a couple of inches between my back and the live wire.

Before I went under that wire I noticed that the lace which the Belgian woman had given me as a souvenir made my mother's noise, lest it might be the innocent means of electrocuting me by touching the live wire. I took it out, rolled it up and threw it away as far as I could.

Then I lay down on my stomach and crawled or rather writher under the wire like a snake, with my feet first, and there was any question of my hugging my mother as closely as possible, because I realized that even to touch the wire above me with my back meant instant death.

Anxious as I was to get on the other side, I didn't hurry this operation. I feared that there might be some little rat that had overheard and I exercised the greatest possible care in going under, taking nothing for granted.

Kneels and Thanks God
When I finally got through and straightened up, there was still several feet of Belgium between me and liberty, represented by the six feet which separated the electric barrier from the last barbed wire fence, but before I went another step I went down on my knees and thanked God for my long series of escapes and especially for this last achievement, which seemed to me to bring me freedom.

Then I crawled under the barbed wire and retrieved the lace and the German uniform. I had no clear idea just where I was and I didn't much care. I was out of the power of the Germans and that was enough.

I had walked perhaps a hundred yards, when I remembered the lace I had thrown over the barrier, and dangerous as I realized the undertaking to be, I determined to walk back and get it. This necessitated

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what had happened was that I had lost my sense of direction and had wandered in the arc of a circle, returning to the same fence that I had been so long in getting through.

This solution of the mystery came to me suddenly and at once searched the landscape for something in the way of a landmark to guide me. For once my faithful friend, the North Star, had failed me. The sky was pitch dark and there wasn't a star in the heavens.

In the distance, at about what appeared to be about three miles away, but which turned out to be six, I could discern the lights of a village, and I knew it must be a Dutch village, as lights are not allowed in Belgium in that indiscriminate way.

My course was now clear, I would make a beeline for that village. Before I had gone very far I found myself in a marsh or swamp and I turned back a little, hoping to find a better path. Finding none, I retraced my steps and kept straight ahead, determined to reach that village at all costs and to severer neither to the right or left until I got there.

One moment I would be in water up to my knees and the next I would sink in mud clear up to my waist. I paid no attention to my condition. It was merely a repetition of what I had gone through many times before, but this time I had a definite goal and once I reached it I knew my troubles would be over.

Three Hours in a Swamp
It took me perhaps three hours to reach firm ground. The path I struck led to within half a mile of the village. I shall never forget that path; it was almost as welcome to my feet as the opposite bank of the Meuse had seemed.

The first habitation I came to was a little workshop with a bright light shining outside. It must have been after midnight, but the people inside were apparently just quitting work. There were three men and two boys engaged in making wooden shoes.

It wasn't necessary for me to explain to them that I was a refugee, even if I had been able to speak their language. I was caked with mud up to my shoulders and I suppose my face must have recorded some of the experiences I had gone through that memorable night.

"I want the British consul!" I told them. "And I want him mighty bad."

(To Be Continued)

Spring Brings No Relief to Hungering Russians
Moscow, May 20.—The food situation in Petrograd and other large cities of Russia, instead of improving with the advent of spring and the opening of river navigation is constantly growing worse. The bread ration in Petrograd which had been one-eighth of a pound weekly, now is totally exhausted.

In Moscow conditions are somewhat better. The bread ration is a quarter of a pound, and other food is obtainable at high prices. Throughout the country there is no promise of improvement in the near future.

WAR FUND DRIVE BEGINS
Keystone Hall, Chairman H. M. North, Jr., will address the workers and issue instructions for the week's campaign, in which it is expected to raise \$25,000 as Columbia's allotment.

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THIS WEEK, NERVOUS MOTHER

Tells How Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Restored Her Health.

Philadelphia, Pa.—"I was very weak, always tired, my back ached, and I felt sickly most of the time. I went to a doctor and he said I had nervous indigestion, which added to my weak condition kept me worrying most of the time—and he said if I could not stop that, I could not get well. I heard so much about Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound my husband wanted me to try it. I took it for a week and felt a little better. I kept it up for three months, and I feel fine and can eat anything now without distress or nervousness. Mrs. J. Worthline, 2842 North Taylor St., Philadelphia, Pa.

The majority of mothers nowadays overdo their work so many demands upon their time and strength; the result is invariably a weakened, run-down, nervous condition with nervous headache, irritability and depression—and soon more serious ailments develop. It is at such periods in life that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will restore a normal healthy condition, as it did to Mrs. Worthline.

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