

Reading for the Social the Family

"When a Girl Marries"

By ANN LISLE

A New, Romantic Serial Dealing With the Absorbing Problems of a Girl Wife

Chapter CXXV
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When Neal passed the restaurant the day I was lunching with Anthony Norreys I was helpless, and I knew it.

I couldn't lean out across the balcony and shout to Neal that there wasn't the slightest hope that he would call his attention to my presence, or that he'd do anything more than bow even if she did. So I had to let my brother get away from me again, and I didn't even know where he was living.

Later in the afternoon, when Tony and I had talked over all about Betty's happiness and the bravado that was keeping her from coming to bay, and he had gone back to work—I put my pride in my pocket and telephoned Evvy. I wanted news of Neal, so I wanted to let her know how to get in touch with him. But Evvy wasn't home. I left word for her to telephone me that evening or the next morning.

"Send her up," I replied, with mixed emotions.

I didn't expect to enjoy Evvy's visit, but I thought it might prove useful to me, as it was right—and wrong, as soon as our first greetings were exchanged, Evvy got down to business. She had taken out of her smart sables scarf and seemed absorbed in patting the fur to absolute softness as she spoke in her throaty, little voice:

"Is that distinguished-looking man you were lunching with yesterday the latest Anne?"

"What do you mean?" I demanded.

"Oh, don't play Puritan with me!" Evvy's voice was amused, and she gave me a heating glance at her eyes before they dropped again to a study of the scarf.

"I'm not playing anything," I replied, smoothly. "I want to know,

however, what you mean when you ask a married woman if—a bachelor is the latest?"

"A baby stare certainly goes with that remark," laughed Evvy. "My dear, don't pretend that you're unconscious of the sad fact that since the charming married women monopolize the bachelors, the debutantes have to put up with the neglected husbands. Society certainly is a merry-go-round."

"Don't be cynical, Evvy!" I retorted, unheeding the way she hadn't known I possessed. "Your role is girlish innocence. Cynicism ages wide blue eyes dreadfully."

"I was trying to be tactful," replied Evvy, fixing her blue eyes at her widest on me and evidently giving up the effort. "But you want it straight and if you haven't any other sincere friend in New York, I never forget—what I owe you and Jim. That's to save you from yourselves. If you don't see where you're driving that dear boy the way you're carrying on—well, it's time a real friend told you."

"Evvy! You're insulting. I won't listen," I cried, wondering if women ordered other women out of their apartments anywhere except on the stage.

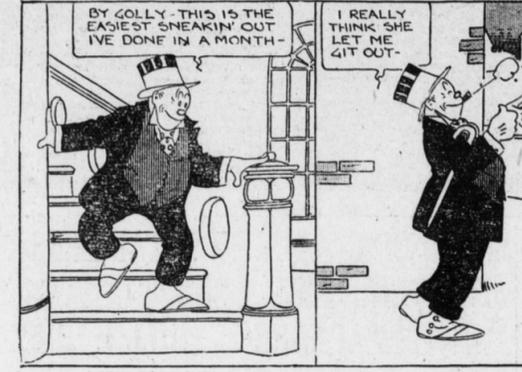
"Evvy rose, and her voice had an injured, husky sweetness when she spoke again:

"Anne, you act as if we had to mince words. Don't I know there isn't a particle of harm in you? But you drive me to distraction with the warmth of your eyes and hair, and the coldness of your mouth and manner. Tell me about you—and you freeze him. And our dear, unstable, reckless, boyish Jimmie—don't you see what you're doing to him?"

"Evvy!" I cried in real distress. "What do you mean?"

"I mean this, Anne Harrison! Jim has to have his own way or think he's getting it. I didn't understand that, so I broke with him long ago. I don't want to see another woman—his wife—drive him still nearer the reefs that I did."

Bringing Up Father



There was a hidden barb in every word, but the worst was saved for the climax. "And I'm told that this Mrs. Cosby is warm and alluring and young. Do be careful, Anne, and if you have any trumps—play them."

"Are you actually trying to do me a good turn?" I asked, revealing my attitude clearly before I realized it.

"Yes I am—though you may not believe it," said Evvy more convincingly than she had ever spoken before. "I saw Jim and the Cosby woman at the Breakwater Inn Saturday night drinking vichy as if it were nectar. I'd come over from our country place with Neal. He was staying the weekend with us. How that nice boy did wince when he saw his sister's husband playing the devoted to a beautiful woman! Now, how do you think he'd have felt if he'd seen you yesterday with your gaunt cavalier?"

"Neal knows me," I cried. "He wouldn't have thought any harm."

Evvy broke in with a laugh: "Neal's beginning to know the city, too, and what it does to people. He's a man now, Anne. He has a man's way of looking at things—and a man's emotions. He idealizes his 'Babbie,' and I'd be the last to wake him up—unless I had to."

And as his wife and daughters were not about, the there was no knowing whether he was only joking, or if he did actually number one of these household pests among his immediate family.

However, there are plenty of families that would cheerfully part with four thousand dollars to wave a long farewell to the demotivated knocker that is always curling the joy of living and regard the release as cheap at the price.

Hammer-Throwers Among the Fair
If you study the knocker on his native hearth-rug you will discover that he or she—for there are some marvelous hammer-throwers among the fair—has never a creative personality.

He is kept entirely busy in wrecking the creations, aspirations, hopes, gifts and joys of every one who comes within the radius of the trusty little hammer.

The knocker is the original "blighter" whose sole joy consists in picking flaws in some one's else achievements, and telling how things really should have been done.

He has hindsight—if he possesses foresight he never applies it—the finished product is his delight, it offers more scope for his hammer.

When the family knocker the head of the house, he runs for his trusty little implement every time his wife gets a new gown, and with eyes glowing with real malice and descent that he tell her that she dresses "too young for a woman of her age." If she has anticipated this knock by getting the oldest, saddest, most down-hearted creature in the semi-mourning department, he is still prepared with a knock or two. Isn't the thing too short? or a bit low in the neck? or isn't it a trifle too scanty to suit? or doesn't it resemble that old thing Mrs. Dubb has been wearing for the past three years?

And that settles it. Mrs. Dubb is the synonym for all that is fruitless, the synonym of clothes, and his wife now loathes her new gown to such a degree that his final knock about its utter extravagance falls to bring a reaction.

Daughter's Gown Too Old
If it is daughter that is being pilloried on account of her new gown, the hammer strokes are reversed and he informs her that the gown is "entirely too old for a girl of her age." It is also too long and too high about the ears and he'll stand none of that vampire suggestion about her clothes. He will have question about her clothes, he will have question about that she is his daughter and not Theda Bara.

It is the same way about everything else. If the wife sings, she is off the key, or flat, or sharp, or the last time he heard that thing, Mary Garden sang it, and it seems almost a desecration, and by the time his wife has dissembled that he knows nothing at all covered about music, her spirit is broken and she does not want to sing.

But sometimes it is the wife and mother who is the knocker in the home, and her gent and incessant tap, tap, tap may be heard on every subject from father's increasing waist line down to the curtains in the next-door house, which are imitation, while hers are which are imitation, while hers are which she loves her husband dearly, but she considers it her sacred duty to tell him of his faults, particularly at meals, where he may sit as a horrible example to the children.

She finds fault with everything from the tobacco he smokes to the way he cuts his hair, and she does not think that if he had it trimmed another way it would hide the fact that he has not a very well shaped head?

And is he actually going out again to-night, and she does not see why he does not stay at home oftener, after all she does to make the home what it is.

And, good heavens, is Mary, the oldest daughter, going to have company lemonade for them. If they want lemonade, let them get it at the corner drug store. Then she takes a shy at every friend of Mary's who has ever shown a head around the premises. And so on ad infinitum, till you do not wonder at the man who said that he had a little knocker in his home that he'd give four thousand dollars to get rid of—and I should not be surprised if there weren't others who would not gladly raise the ante.

FIVE MINUTES' WALK
Hubbubs—What is your idea of the most deceptive thing in life? Subbubs—Well, just what I should say a five minutes' walk from the station.—New York Globe.

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Life's Problems Are Discussed



There was a neat pile of unopened letters on my desk, and just as I reached for the paper-cutter to unseal them I said to myself:

"I know what is in every one of them. I one form or another they will all contain the appeal: 'Please, Madam Spider, sitting weaving your web of words, tell us how we may win our hearts' desire.' One of them will express the longing for companionship; another asks only success and how to gain it; a third will yearn for the love which is withheld, and a fourth could reach the stars if only he were able to obtain the necessary education."

Yet in every unsatisfied longing lies the seed of accomplishment. We need the paper-cutter to unseal them as if they were not in our power to secure it.

But the trouble with most of us is that we see only one way to "Fortune's happy days." We concede that all roads lead to Rome, but we ignore the lanes and the by-paths which are open to us and fix our gaze solely on that one highway which has a hedge between us and it so high that we cannot climb over.

A woman told me a story of her own experiences which illustrates this fact.

She said that as a young girl she wanted to be a large letter a cultivator her voice. She knew no one, the few people whom in time she met did not attract her, and she was desperately lonely.

This led to acute homesickness. She began to lose interest in her studies; her voice, even her health was affected by her mental state, and she was many times on the verge of giving up and going home. But her pride was involved and she tried to stick it out.

As a recourse from this depression, she followed a quaint little impulse and began to write letters a day to an imaginary friend. And gradually she found the composition of these letters so absorbing that she forgot all about being lonely. She had dreamed of being alone, and walking the streets, and had dreamed even more remaining in her room. But now that feeling passed.

After her lesson was over and when she went to her room she had something to do that interested her.

She took the greatest pains with those letters, trying to make them natural and charming and full of color and incident. She related bits of her past life, the happenings of her present. She described her new impressions, the things she saw and heard, the people she encountered.

Then came the desire to answer these letters, so she created a correspondent whose communications must be, of course, in an entirely different vein. This correspondent she decided, letters, he was a traveler, and consequently she began to study maps and books of travel.

She kept this up. During the time that elapsed, she had made several congenial acquaintances. To a few of these she showed her letters, and finally one who was connected with a magazine urged her to try her hand at fiction. She did so, began to sell her stories and ultimately found her career switched from one form of expression to quite another.

As it turned out, her guardian angel must have known what she was about, for her voice, after a good deal of time spent in its cultivation, proved to be nothing remarkable.

The main point, however, is that she got to "Rome" not along the highway upon which she had set out to travel, but by a little, winding path which caught her fancy.

Suppose that she had ignored that impulse to write the letters, that she would have stupidly crushed an unsuspected talent.

She was not taking any time from

her lessons or her hours of practice; she was simply putting a little life and vivacity into her idle moments, which she would otherwise have occupied in pitying herself for being so lonely and unhappy.

Professor William James asserted that we only use about one-fourth of our brain power, and that we are really untapped mental ability.

The majority of us don't begin to draw on these reservoirs, and we are not always wise when we suppress our impulses to do things on the side.

The more knowledge and training we can pick up here and there, by that much more our work in any particular line is improved and enriched.

Advice to the Lovelorn
TWO BOYS AND A GIRL
Dear Miss Fairfax:

I am eighteen and love a young man of twenty. A short time ago I met a young man and he asked me to write to his brother in France. His brother knew me, but I didn't know him. Foolishly I started to write and he answered with nice friendly letters. Now I get letters from him with love in them.

I am worried for the soldier is coming home soon. My friend, whom I really love, knows nothing of these letters, and if he found out, I don't know what he would say to me.

WORRIED
I should tell the young man I really love the truth, while no one else is around, and to which no one, but the most jealous "Turk" could object. You wrote merely friendly letters to a soldier, as thousands of American girls did, and finally the soldier's friendly letters began to contain a love interest. At the same time I'd write to the soldier and tell him your interest was only friendly.

SHES IN LOVE WITH HER TEACHER
Dear Miss Fairfax:
I am a girl of eighteen and go to college, and I am deeply in love with my teacher, ten years my senior. He has asked me to marry him. But my family objects. They claim he is too old for me and that he also pays much attention to his

By McManus



other pupils. Would you advise me which is best, to marry him or try to forget him?

DOUBTFUL
At eighteen it is certainly best to regard the wishes of one's parents, as no one else could possibly have your welfare so closely at heart. If the young man cares about you in the right way, he will certainly be anxious for you to finish your educational course before asking you to marry him. For the present, at least, I would try to forget him.



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