

Secretary of Frivolous Affairs

by MAY TUTTRELLE

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Illustrations by V.L. BARNES

SYNOPSIS.

Jo Codman and her sister Louie are left orphans. Their property has been swept away by the death of their father and they are compelled to cast about for some means to earn a living. Louie answers an advertisement of an invalid who wants a companion. She declines the position. Louie advertises for a position as companion, and Mrs. Hazard replies. She offers Louie a position as her "secretary of frivolous affairs." Her chief work is to steer Mrs. Hazard's son and daughter in the right matrimonial path. Louie talks baseball to Hap Hazard and also gains the confidence of Laura Hazard. The Duc de Trouville is believed to be interested in Laura. Mrs. Hazard gives a big reception and Louie meets many people high in the social world. Natalie Agazziz, to whom Hap has been paying attention, loses an emerald bracelet during the reception. She declares there is no other like it in the world. It develops that Natalie has lost several pieces of jewelry under similar circumstances. Hap takes Louie to the baseball game. He tells her he is not engaged to Natalie and has been cured of his infatuation. The scene changes to the Hazard country place, where many notables have been invited for the summer. Louie and Laura visit the farm of Winthrop Abbott, an author, in whom Laura takes considerable interest. Duc de Trouville arrives at the Hazard place. Louie hears Winthrop's motor boat out late at night. Next morning the papers announce the robbery of several nearby homes. Natalie accuses Louie of stealing her ruby pendant. Mrs. Hazard assures Louie of her confidence in her. Hap declares his love for Louie. She reciprocates, but will not admit it as she fears what Mrs. Hazard will say. Louie is excused from dinner on account of a headache. She is awakened at midnight and finds Hap in her room. Next morning Hap explains that he was in pursuit of a mysterious woman he had seen in the corridor and who eluded him by passing through Louie's room. Natalie identifies the emerald bracelet found in Winthrop's safe as her own. Louie's sister, Jo, arrives for a week's stay. John Crowninshield pays a visit to Louie. Louie watches all night with Natalie. She sees Winthrop cross the lawn in the early morning, shadowed by Thomas, a footman. Louie hears a noise in the gallery and goes to investigate. She slips into the card room and stumbles over a bag. She starts to carry it to her room and is surprised by someone in the hall and falls downstairs. She breaks her arm. The bag belongs to John. Louie again finds herself under suspicion. Louie overhears Hap tell his mother that he intends to marry Louie even if she is a thief, which she does not believe. Louie declares that she will not marry him, but Mrs. Hazard says Hap can have her if he wants her. Detective Adams is found bound and gagged. Jo is missing. The bound man is found by the roadside. Jo returns. Jo tells her story. She says she heard a noise in the gallery and went to investigate. She surprised Duc Henry, a servant, and a third man removing a picture from a frame. They seized her and made her a prisoner in a cottage in the wood. She shot her guard and escaped. As she fishes her story, a shot is heard in the gallery. Duc de Trouville is found on the floor, with Thomas sitting beside him holding a revolver. Thomas turns out to be a detective in the employ of an insurance company. He clears up the mystery of the robberies. D'Aubigny, de Trouville and Mrs. Cutler, a guest in the house, are the thieves.

CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued.

"Oh, don't mention it," I gasped excitedly. "It is of no consequence at all." Then another thought came to me. "And you didn't suspect me of the thefts?" He smiled and shook his head. "Nor Mr. Abbott," he added. "Our insurance people keep pretty close record of family jewels of every kind, and we knew from the very beginning that Mr. Abbott owned the jewels the police found there." "We were going to prove it, too," John put in. "That was so simple we didn't have to worry about it." Now why hadn't he told us before? Think of the heart-burnings and the petty suspicions he could have prevented! "As I say, I knew these things, but it wasn't wise to tell them," Thomas continued. "In the first place, as long as the real thieves imagined some one else was under suspicion it was easier to keep watch on them. I followed that line of reasoning throughout. Everything else was comparatively simple after that extraordinary session at dinner"—again he smiled—"where every one told their schemes for hiding their jewels. If I had had any doubts at all they were dissipated then. The persons who heard those statements were only the guests in the house and three servants, Burrows, the butler, myself and another footman. It narrowed things down. Incidentally it made the final haul simple for the thieves." "Then," I put in, "if you did not suspect Mr. Abbott at any time, why was it you—you followed him across the lawn the night I fell downstairs?" "Every one looked at me in astonishment. I don't know that any one understood except Thomas." "I was making assurance doubly sure," he replied. "I saw Mr. Abbott as he landed from his boat, and naturally curious as to what he was going to do, I kept my eye on him. He did nothing but stand for a long time and stare at a window above, and—"

It, if by any chance I had re-entered the house by the back door instead of the front door after Mr. Abbott went away, I would have caught them going out. As it was, I came in the front door, and so it came about that I flashed the light in your face." That seemed to be all of it. Mrs. Hazard and I sat looking at each other with our mouths mutually open, and simultaneously we closed them. John said nothing; Hap sat pounding one clenched fist into the palm of his hand and grinning—I don't know why. "And now, de Trouville," continued Thomas,—wasn't that an awful way to speak to a duke?—"there remains only to get an order from you for the jewels in the safety deposit. For your information I'll say that d'Aubigny and two of his accomplices are already under arrest in the city, and Mrs. Cutler is being—detained upstairs. It's all off. Give up. It remains, too, for Mrs. Hazard here to say what shall be done with you—after all the stolen things are recovered. I'm satisfied to get them. I'll send you to prison for twenty years if she wants me to, or I think I can induce my people to let you go." For the first time the duke spoke. "I am at your mercy, Mrs. Hazard," he said. "I deny nothing." And he didn't have the least bit of an accent! Hap looked at Mrs. Hazard, Mrs. Hazard looked at John, John looked at the duke, and the duke looked at me—appealingly, I thought. Jo and I really were the cause of his downfall! Poor little duke! I was awfully sorry for him! "I think, under all the circumstances," John said slowly at last, for he was holding in on his temper—he was awful angry about Jo being abducted—"that if His Grace returns everything that has been stolen—I think we are prepared to let the matter drop." I could have kissed him for that. "He has been called to Europe suddenly, and he will decide to remain there for all time!" "And the others?" Thomas queried. "If either is brought to trial the effect will be the same." "I mean all of them," said John. And that's how that part of it ended.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Mist Before the Sun. After all, our mystery was simple when we had the key, which was knowing who the thieves were. And it was so easy to see how Mrs. Cutler had stolen those first bracelets—at the Abercrombie's and Mrs. Loring's and also the ruby pendant. But there were a great many things we never did know about, that we had to leave to conjecture. For instance, we never did know exactly how those duplicates of the old masterpieces were made. Count Felix von Brunner who, by the way, happened to be Mrs. Henry Dykeman's German count, tried to explain his theories of the substitution. There were photographs made, and the measurement of the pictures taken, then all depended upon the skill of the copyist. But we never did find out how they reproduced the colors so accurately without copying from the picture itself. After all, though, the colors were not very accurate. When the originals were brought back from a cottage in the wood, where they had been hidden, and placed alongside, the substitutes were so palpably fakes that it's a wonder we had not discovered it long before. Count von Brunner, whom we had the pleasure of welcoming to Lone Oak, waved his hand disgustedly at the lot. "Ach!" he exclaimed. "Dey would not deceive a little child!" But then none of us knew as much about art as he did. Natalie explained her part of the story to us. She had suspected Winthrop of taking the jewels, as he had had the opportunity at Mrs. Loring's, the Abercrombie's and the reception. She had refused to answer those questions the police put because answers must necessarily have implicated Winthrop. How we had misunderstood her! The first suspicion of the real truth came to her the night of Winthrop's arrest, when she and His Grace had been alone on the terrace. His Grace had tried to embrace her. She was wearing only a brooch that evening, but it was a very handsome one. Something in the attitude of His Grace, she said, aroused her suspicions. She knew she had the brooch when she came upon the terrace; she put up her hand after the embrace, and the brooch was gone. Then she remembered that it had happened before—twice before at Lone Oak, and before that in town. Once her suspicions were aroused she could connect His Grace with everything she had missed except the ruby, the bracelet missing at the Abercrombie's and the very first missing bracelet stolen at Mrs. Loring's. She came to me immediately after the incident on the terrace with an

apology. If she had only confided in me then, what a lot of trouble would have been averted! That night came Winthrop's arrest, and finally the red-headed reporter, who took her to the police station, where she identified Winthrop's emerald bracelet as her own. That threw everything into confusion again. No wonder Natalie kept her suspicions to herself! I had a talk with Jo when John and Detective Thomas went away to town to bring from the safety deposit the duke's loot. I tried to point out to her how perfectly silly it was for us to break out hearts just because two men who loved us had entirely too much money, while we only had an interest in a mine that might give us just enough to buy two wedding-gowns. She sat with her hands clasped loosely before her for a while, then her eyelashes swept her cheeks. "It just had to happen, Louie," she said softly at last. "He's so perfectly dear!" "They always are!" I quoted. I went down on my knees, seized her hand, and made her look at me. "You're going to marry John," I insisted. "Yes," she answered. Then: "I can't help it, dear. He would not have listened if I had said no, so I didn't. We've both been going to our doom for the last month—and we knew it! Louie, do you think any woman can be sure of herself in a month?" It seemed so odd, Jo asking my advice, that I stared at her with my mouth open in the way I'll never, never get over. "I think a woman knows her mind in five minutes," I said, grossly exaggerating. And Jo believed it! I don't know who told Mrs. Hazard; I guess she's wise enough to know things without being told. She came in and perched on the side of a chair hardly proportioned to her short legs and held in on that chuckle of hers. "I don't see how I'm ever going to stand three weddings," she said, "but—"



We Stood and Looked at Them, Amazed. necklace of pear-shaped diamonds and a jeweled aigrette, the wonder of two continents, which belonged to Mrs. Loring. "That's a part of the first north shore robbery," commented Thomas. There followed other things no one recognized. "If that isn't Alice Peabody's Alexandrite collar I'll eat it," Laura said suddenly, "and we hadn't heard a word about that being stolen." "I wonder if His Grace embraced her to get it?" Natalie whispered to us. Gradually John came to Natalie's missing jewels; the six bracelets, the pendant and the rope of pearls she had missed from her jewel box on the night Hap had seen a woman's skirt—Mrs. Cutler's—disappear into the card room as he came up the

stairs; the night he kicked up the row about the card room being locked. The sapphire and diamond bracelet, which she has lost at the Abercrombie's, appeared, and the bracelet missing at Mrs. Loring's, the very first jewel she had lost. The ruby pendant, which made me positively shiver, came next, and the brooch the duke had secured the night he embraced her. Then those other jewels lost on similar occasions. At last John unfolded—the emerald bracelet! "Not another like it in the world," Natalie had said, "or so many emeralds matched so perfectly." Yet she had identified a family heirloom of Winthrop's as her bracelet! If she had only looked she'd have seen it didn't have the patent clasp! "I think you and Winthrop should look up your ancestors," Laura remarked, "for way back somewhere those bracelets were a pair." Hap had me by my unbroken arm, hurrying me across the strip of lawn in the direction of the bench. We clattered down the steps that led from the rocks above to the sand, and sat down on the lower one. "Now shut your eyes and put out your finger," Hap said. "Which finger?" I shut my eyes and put out all my fingers to be sure of the proper one. It's a blessing I had broken my right arm. "There! Now it's settled." Hap extravagantly kissed the fingers one by one as I opened my eyes and looked at my ring. "Is it all really true?" I asked after a while, and two tears threatened in my eyes. "Is it?" Hap repeated softly. I fumbled with the ring. Hap lifted my hand and kissed it—the ring, I mean. "There's not another like it in the world," he said. "See, the nineteen rubies are you, and the twenty-two diamonds are me—" "What's the big one in the middle?" I asked. "That's us," he grinned. "There's not another like it in the world," I whispered. "Or so many rubies matched so perfectly," Hap quoted. And notwithstanding the seriousness of the situation we both giggled. We were awfully young! Hap put his arm around me. There was no use struggling against a kiss. I was on the injured list anyhow, and he was the best tackle Harvard ever had. THE END.

THAT ABODE OF THE PAST

John Galsworthy's Charming Picture of an Old Disused Southern Landmark. "Yes, suh—here we are at that old time place!" And our dark driver drew up his little victoria gently, writes John Galsworthy in Scribner's. Through the open doorway, into a dim cavern of ruined wood, we passed. The mildew and dirt, the dark, denuded darkness of that old hostelry, rotting down with damp and time! And our guide, the tall, thin, gray haired dame, who came forward with such native ease, and moved before us, touching this fungused wall, that rusting stairway and telling, as it were, no one, in her soft, slow speech, things that any one could see—what a strange and fitting figure. Before the smell of the deserted, oozing rooms, before that old creature leading us on and on, negligent of all our questions and talking to the air, as though we were not, we felt such discomfort that we soon made to go out again into such freshness as there was on that day of dismal heat. Then realizing, it seemed, that she was losing us, our guide turned; for the first time looking in our faces, she smiled, and said in her sweet, weak voice, like the sound from the strings of a spinnet long unplayed on: "Don't you wahn to see the dome room, an' all the other rooms right here, of this old place?" Again those words! We had not the hearts to disappoint her. And as we followed on and on, along the moldering corridors and rooms where the black peeling papers hung like stalactites, the dominance of our senses gradually dropped from us, and with our souls we saw its soul—the soul of this old time place; this mustering house of the old south, bereft of all but ghosts, and the gray pigeons niched in the rotting gallery round a narrow courtyard open to the sky. "This is the dome room, suh and lady; right over the slave market it is. Here they did the business of the state—sure; see their face up there in the roof—Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, Davis, Lee—there they are! All gone—now! Yes, suh!"

He Was Handicapped. Just what constitutes news is a much mooted question to the general public generally. The average newspaper reader considers that anything that pertains to him personally is the most important piece of news that a paper can print. A negro porter in one of the popular Kansas City clubs, recently divorced, furnished an example of one conception of news. Approaching a reporter in the club-rooms a few days ago, the porter remarked: "Say, boss, don't you all know I done got a divorce, and I ain't seen a single line about it in the paper yet, an' it been mos' two weeks." "Well, Rastus, that's strange," the reporter replied, trying to look serious. "Can't you all put it in the paper now?" he asked. "Tain't as how I cum to get the divorce that I cares to let people know about, but don't you know, boss, that I meets a lot of cunk ladies every day that jes' won't speak to me, 'cause they think I'm married."—Kansas City Journal.

WAYS OF SERVING ICE CREAM. Always Acceptable Dessert May Be Sent to the Table in a Great Variety of Forms. There are modes even in the serving of ice cream. At present macaroon baskets, wafer boxes and a disguising covering of lady cake are among the most popular ways of serving this always acceptable dessert. To make macaroon baskets, dip the outer edges of five almond macaroons in the syrup obtained from melted granulated sugar. The first macaroon is used for the bottom of the basket, and the others are stuck together to form a ring about it, exactly like the burlap baskets we used to make when we were children. Fill this receptacle with ice cream and sprinkle ground macaroons on top. Wafer boxes are put together in exactly the same way. Square wafers are the most desirable, two being used for the bottom and one at each end standing upright. The ice cream should be cut into blocks and fit into the frame. Pink and white ice cream, garnished with cherries, make an attractive color combination. A novel way to serve brick ice cream is to cover the sides and end of the brick with thick slices of lady cake. Cut the cream as usual. Each slice will have a frame of cake, contrasting prettily with the colors of the cream.

IN PLACE OF REFRIGERATOR. Try This Substitute Where the Highly Desired Ice Box Is Not for the Moment Procurable. Take a box of the desired size and remove the bottom, replacing it with strips of wood about an inch wide and two inches apart. Now stand the box on end and nail cleats on the inside to support the shelves, which should be removable for convenience in cleaning. Next take a piece of burlap, which should be about twenty inches longer than the height of the box and wide enough to reach around the box with a few inches overlap. Beginning at the edge of the box nearest the front, tack the burlap on smoothly, bringing it even with the bottom of the box and allowing the surplus length to project at the top. The burlap should form the door of the box by slipping the selvage edge of the goods over a row of small nails driven up and down along the side of the box. Place a two gallon pail filled with water on top of the box and allow the length of burlap to fall over into the pail. The burlap will become saturated, and the evaporation will keep the interior cool.—Woman's Home Companion.

Cauliflower With Dressing. Cauliflower is far more delicate if cooked for a good hour. It should be washed and examined carefully to see that there are no insects lurking inside. Tie in a clean white cloth, put it on in cold water, stem up in a granite or porcelain sauce pan—never in tin or iron. When done place it, flowers up, in a hot platter and pour over it the following sauce: Rub together a tablespoonful of butter and one of flour to smooth paste, add gradually a cup and a half of the water in which the cauliflower was boiled. Let this boil for two or three minutes seasoning with pepper and salt, and just before serving add the well beaten yolk of an egg mixed with a tablespoonful of cold water to prevent curdling. This is also a good sauce for asparagus, using the water in which the vegetable was boiled.

Swiss Buttons. Beat two eggs lightly and add one quarter cup milk. Add gradually to one cup flour mixed, and sifted with one teaspoon salt. Place a colander over a kettle of boiling water, put in one-half the mixture, and force, using a wooden potato masher, into the water. When done (which will be as soon as they come to top of water) remove with a skimmer to a hot vegetable dish and sprinkle with grated mild cheese and salt. Repeat with remaining mixture.

Old Cream Use. When cream is only slightly sour it may be made delicious to serve with puddings, etc., in the following way: Put into a basin with the juice of a lemon and a tablespoonful of sugar and whip until quite stiff. This treatment makes it excellent, and increases the quantity at the same time.

Pineapple-Orange Salad. Arrange upon each individual salad plate a crisp, curly lettuce leaf; upon this place a smaller slice of canned pineapple, then a smaller slice of orange and top all with a spoonful of whipped cream, slightly salted, with which a spoonful of chopped walnuts has been mixed.

New Cranberry Sauce. Make a sauce of one pint of cranberries, one cup of sugar and enough water to make the right thickness. When thoroughly cooked and while hot fill a dish with alternate layers of thin slices of bananas and the sauce. This requires two bananas.

Trifles. Beat five eggs, add saltspoon of salt and enough flour to make a stiff dough. Cut them any shape desired, and drop in hot lard. This is a very old recipe.

Keep Tubs Clean. Wipe out the laundry tubs after each wash day with a cloth, using either kerosene or a good cleansing powder.

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