

DAUGHTERS OF MIDAS

by Anne Austin

THIS HAS HAPPENED

Because he wants to help further ambitions which they have expressed, T. Q. Curtis, department store owner, takes Billy Wells, Nyda Lomax, and Winnie Shelton, employees, into his home as his wards for one year. Billy, ambitious to be a concert violinist, is the only one that is sincere. The others lie to enjoy his generosity.

The girls accidentally learn that he intends to adopt one of them when the year is up. Winnie and Nyda are eager to gain high place in the old man's affections. Billy is unwillingly drawn into the battle. She is infatuated with Dal Romaine, nephew of Mrs. Meadows, the hostess. She believes he is "playing" both her and Winnie Shelton and her suspicions are increased when the two make excuses and are absent from the city over the same weekend.

In spite of her infatuation, she tenderly remembers Clay Curtis, son of her benefactor, who has disinherited himself and is living with the Wells family in the poor part of town, working in a factory by day and writing music at night. She loses interest in her music, and finally she has a breakdown.

While she is confined to her room, Constance Bradley, a well-bred, wealthy girl, whom Billy admires tremendously, calls to see her and the two plan to go to a resort, Crockett Lake, for a month. Constance mentions during the conversation that Romaine has an interest in a gown shop. Billy is stunned at this information, because she has been induced by Romaine's flattering compliments to make extravagant purchases there. Winnie's appearance and manner when she returns from her mysterious weekend trip confirms Billy's suspicions that there is something between her and Dal Romaine. She is almost in hysterics with fear and suspicion, coupled with her terrible need for Dal's love.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY
CHAPTER XXXIX

On Tuesday evening, while the other members of the Curtis household were at dinner, Viola, the maid, brought Billy's tray to her bedside, grinning with wicked glee.

"Here your dinner, Miss Billy, and if you feel like it, find a piece of paper folded up in your napkin. I don't know nothin' about it."

The delicious dinner was destined to receive not one-tenth of the attention to which it was entitled. As soon as Viola had buckled out of the room, Billy snatched up the napkin and shook it. Out of a blank envelope she drew a single sheet of notepaper, covered with the tiny, beautiful printing

which had become so heart-shakingly familiar to her, though she had received only one other specimen of it before.

"Mignon, they won't let me see you," the note began abruptly, without a date. "T. Q. C. has forbidden me to write to you or to send you flowers. But I must see you. Aunt Lucia tells me you are going away for a month. Are you too ill to stand to the garden to see me tonight? Oh, Mignon, darling, I'm starving for the sight of you, for the touch of your dear hands. I am willing you to come to me tonight, for just a few precious minutes. I shall be waiting for you in the old summer house at eleven. I can't let you go away for so many dreary weeks without telling you goodby. I love you, Dal."

Her dinner untouched, she lay for a long time, quite still, her body flushed with the fever of anticipation. Magically, the very sight of his handwriting had wiped out all her sick despair.

Craftiness dictated her first action after those long minutes of delicious anticipation. She worked with frantic haste for a few minutes—making appointments of food upon her plate, scattering crumbs from the toast, pouring out a cup of cooling chocolate. Then she disposed of most of the food in the bathroom, leaving just enough to deceive any observer into thinking she had eaten a fairly hearty meal. It did not occur to her to eat the food. The very sight of it was distasteful to her, in her state of frantic anticipation.

She was safely back in bed again when Viola called for the tray, and she smiled demurely when the colored girl exclaimed happily over the amount she had "eaten."

T. Q. and Mrs. Meadows paid her visits after dinner, and the old man was quite jubilant over the color in her cheeks and the sparkle in her eyes.

"If I didn't have the doctor's word for it, I swear you'd been playing possum on me," he told her fondly. "Get a good night's sleep now, Billikin, and be ready for your trip tomorrow. Here's a little check for incidentals," he added awkwardly, tucking a folded slip of paper under her pillow.

He kissed her on both cheeks, and she could see that he was surprised and touched when she clung to him, crying brokenly: "Oh, you're so good to me, so good, so good!"

The check, which she unfolded with a flush of shame and eagerness, was for five hundred dollars—an extra month's allowance. How Nyda and Winnie would hate her if they knew!

At ten o'clock she locked her door while she dressed with trembling haste, even to shoes and

stockings. Then she crept back into bed again, hiding her dress under a quilted satin dressing robe. She was innocently yawning over a book when Mrs. Meadows came to ask how she was feeling and to kiss her goodnight.

Nyda and Winnie had gone to a dance at the Country Club, Mrs. Meadows told her, and Mr. Curtis was working in the library. At half past ten Billy snatched off the reading light above her bed. She lay for long minutes, tense and quivering in the dark, passing the time by reciting twenty German poems she had memorized in high school. When she was sure that it was nearly eleven, she slipped out of her room noiselessly, turning the key in the lock and tucking it away safely in the pocket of her spring coat. Her head was swathed in a dark silk scarf. The tread of the servant's stairs creaked under her light steps, but she descended to the first floor without detection.

When she scurried past the butler's pantry, where Sawyers was locking up the silver for the night, the butler looked up, peered at her and called out cheerily, "That you, Clara? You know the rules—back by twelve, old girl."

Old girl! Billy chuckled and waved a hand in flippancy farewell, and Sawyers was satisfied. Evidently he was a far more approachable being where Clara, the parlor maid, was concerned, than he was with the three "young mistresses" of the house. As she sped lightly across the lawn, Billy was surprised to find that her knees were wobbly. And she had thought she could run miles, if those miles led her to Dal Romaine!

"Mignon! God, I thought you weren't coming!" The deep voice that had the power to stir her as had no other sound in the world called out thrillingly to her as she hesitated, panting, at the door of the summerhouse.

She fell into his arms, flattened her body against his, flung back her head with a gesture of utter abandon for his kiss.

"Poor little bit!" he crooned over her, as, through the light fabric of her coat his hands, straining her to him, discovered the almost painfully increased prominence of her ribs and shoulder blades. "You must not be eating a thing, child. Not sleeping either?"

"No," she shivered. "I can't eat. I hate food!" Her voice became suddenly violent. "Someone is always trying to make me eat! But I do wish I could sleep. Why can't I sleep, Dal?" She clung to him like a forlorn, frightened child.

His voice vibrated on the tender, dramatic note that always stirred her so profoundly: "Let's not talk about food in connection with you. I don't like to see a beautiful woman eat. So they're sending you away—so I can't keep you from eating and sleeping!" His voice became light, almost teasing. "Of course I had to see you, darling. You shivered. Are you cold?" He wrapped her coat, and then his arms, more tightly about her.

He humored her, taking his place at the extreme end of the narrow bench she had chosen. By the light of the newly risen moon they could look into each other's eyes. A chill breeze lifted her hair from her forehead, which gleamed ghostly white in the moonlight. Whether it was the magic of the moon or the inner fire of triumph, she could not determine, but his eyes gleamed wide, like disks of black, polished stone.

"Dal, I want you to tell me the truth," she began breathlessly. "First, do you own an interest in Madame Dubois' modiste shop?"

"Why, yes, darling. The woman opened in a shoeing. I saw that she had a really marvelous clothes sense, knew how to buy and how to sell, and I put a little capital into the business." He spoke with utter candor.

"When?"

"When? Let's see—very recently. Oh, yes, two weeks ago today, to be perfectly exact. Oh, I see what's worrying you," he laughed indulgently. "You think I was acting as a sort of 'come-on' man for the firm when I took you there to buy your Belgian lace dress. You're quite wrong, darling. My profits—if I make any—will not include a percentage on that sale."

His voice was light, casual, but she thought she detected a thin strain of sarcasm running through the careful words.

"Oh!" She had to accept his explanation. "I—I hope you will make some money there, Dal—if you need it."

"Don't we all?" His teeth gleamed in an amused smile. "Now what else is bothering the poor little head?"

"Did you really go to Chicago, Dal—and did you go alone?"

"Why, Mignon! I don't understand you!" His voice was deep, but, "Of course you're ill, and I'm not going to say the obvious things about trusting the man you're engaged to be married to."

"Oh, Dal! I'm sorry! I've been nearly crazy with doubt and suspicion—and luck of sleep!" She flung herself prone on the bench, so that her head lay on his knees. So he had taken it for granted all alone that they were to be married. What a self-torturing, suspicious little fool she had been!

It was twelve o'clock when she crept back across the back lawn toward the house, alone, Dal watching her from the shadows of the summerhouse. She paused for a moment to wave to him, before darting into the servants' entrance at the rear of the house. When he had returned her glance, she glanced upward to the rows of windows, to see if a light burned anywhere in that wing of the mansion. What she saw caused her to freeze to immobility, unable to

take a step.

A light burned in Nyda Lomax's room on the third floor, and out of the open window stepped a man, pulling the window shut as he stepped upon the small balcony. A fire escape led from the balcony to within a few feet of the ground, a precaution which T. Q. Curtis had insisted upon. Billy watched him vault lightly over the railing of the stone balcony and begin to descend the fire escape, in a leisurely, accustomed manner, as if he had little or no fear of detection.

Before he had reached the ground, Billy was hurrying on frightened feet up the servants' stairs. A pencil of light under Nyda's door told her that either the room was occupied or that the man—whichever he was—had not taken the trouble to turn it off. She knocked, calling out softly, but in an urgent, frightened voice.

"It's me—Billy, Nyda! Are you there, Nyda?"

There was the sound of hasty footsteps, a closet door opened and shut, then Nyda, with a noisier thrown over her nightgown, flung open the door.

(To be continued.)

Billy goes away and is restored to health and the conviction that Dal Romaine no longer can cast a spell on her. But she is wrong.

Overdoing?
Hurry, Worry and Overwork Bring Heavy Strain.

MODERN life throws a heavy burden on our bodily machinery. The eliminative organs, especially the kidneys, are apt to become sluggish. Retention of excess uric acid and other poisonous waste often gives rise to a dull, languid feeling and, sometimes, toxic backaches and headaches. That the kidneys are not functioning perfectly is often shown by burning or scanty passage of secretions. More and more people are learning to assist their kidneys by the occasional use of Doan's Pills—a stimulant diuretic. Ask your neighbor!

DOAN'S PILLS
60c
Stimulant Diuretic to the Kidneys
Foster-McClellan Co., Mfg. Chicago, U.S.A.



I just didn't know

I REMEMBER now how my friends used to tell me about Prince Albert; how they would make what sounded like the most extravagant claims for it; and how I would say "Uh-huh," and proceed to fill my pipe from the same old package. I just didn't know!

But I found out. One day, the store where I buy my tobacco didn't have my old brand. I heard another customer standing beside me say "Prince Albert" to the man behind the counter. All that I had heard about Prince Albert came back to me in a flash.

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—no other tobacco is like it!

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P. A. is sold everywhere in tidy red tins, round and half-pound tin humidor, and pound crystal-glass humidor with sponge-resistance top. And always with every bit of bite and parch removed by the Prince Albert process.



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C. T. Bennett, who for a number of years engaged in the grocery business in Roseburg, has purchased the Rexroad soda works and is taking over the immediate operation of the business. He will operate the place under the same name as at present and will handle all lines of sodas and fountain supplies as has been done in the past. He is purchasing a great deal of additional equipment, which will be of a first class and sanitary nature. The new equipment will be installed at once. Mr. Rexroad will aid Mr. Bennett in the management of the business for a time.

Women Have Always Wanted

a face powder like the new wonderful French Process Powder called MELLO-GLO—stays on a long time—keeps that ugly shine away—gives the skin a soft, peachy look—prevents large pores. You will be amazed at the beautifying qualities and purity of MELLO-GLO. You will be glad you tried it. Nathan Fullerton.

CONSERVATORY RECITALS

The program announced for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of this week will be given AT THE CONSERVATORY instead of M. E. Church. Pupils of Mrs. Helaine and Mr. Germain will be presented Wednesday and Friday at 8 o'clock, and Mrs. Brand will present her voice students on Thursday evening. Admission free! Everybody welcome.

GRANGE ENTERTAINS VISITORS SATURDAY

Fair Oaks Grange at its meeting May 14 entertained several visitors, among whom were Deputy F. M. Gill of Wasco County, North Master W. A. Rarcher of South Deer Creek Grange and Mrs. Rarcher, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Cachelin and Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Bailey of South Deer Creek Grange. Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Hoffer and son of Evergreen Grange and County Agent Leedy of Melrose Grange.

Worthy Lecturer Ruth Smith presented the following program: Roll call, "What I Expect the Grange to Do for Me," review of one of Kipling's books, Peter Adams;

ELITE PLEATERS REMOVAL NOTICE

All kinds pleating and button making, dressmaking. Mail orders solicited. 616 S. Main St. Belle Case.

Reading, Mrs. John Abeane; reading, Mrs. A. G. Smith; addresses, County Agent Leedy, F. M. Gill, A. C. Armstrong and C. H. Bailey.



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Mrs. G. M. Jones of Myrtle Creek noon and was transacting business was a visitor here Tuesday after- and shopping.

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