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LOVE FOR TWO

BY RUTH DEWEY GROVES

THIS HAS HAPPENED

Bertie Lou Ward married Rod Bryer, who had previously been engaged to Lila March. Lila and her friends, by telling their friends that she was Rod's first love, she continues making life miserable by coming to New York as a guest of Molly Frazer whose husband had given Rod a position.

However, Lila meets a rich Mr. Loree and marries him. Then she asks Bertie Lou to forgive the past and be friends. Trying to keep up socially with their wealthy friends, the Bryers in debt and Rod becomes depressed.

Lila seizes her chance to persuade him to accept a higher salary from Loree, promising security from financial worry (for Bertie Lou's sake).

Shortly after, Lila asks Rod to put some of her jewels in the office vault during her husband's absence. When he returns the case the jewels are gone. He wants to notify the police, but she demurs, pointing out that suspicion against him might spoil his career. They decide to keep the matter secret—even from Bertie Lou—and Rod says he will pay for the jewels as he can save the money. That night he evades the truth when his wife asks why he is so late.

Bertie Lou discovers the falsehood when Rod deceives her a second time after a secret engagement with Lila. A telegram announces the illness of her mother and she leaves abruptly without seeing Rod. Lila tells him it is nothing serious and gets him to spend the week-end at their country home.

Now go on with the story CHAPTER XXVII

"Going to The Birchess with the Lorees."

It was a crushing blow to Bertie Lou that message from Rod. She slumped weakly down on her little old mammy rocker, too heartbreak to cry, and sat there while the pendulum of her wavering faith swung back to the point which it had reached when she made up her mind to return to Wayville on the first available train.

That was just after she had telephoned Rod's office and learned that he was with Lila. No wonder, she had mocked herself, that Lila had been so willing to break their luncheon engagement when instead she could lunch with Rod.

The shock of obtaining further proof of something between her husband and his old sweetheart, coming with the news of her mother's illness, had thrown Bertie Lou into a frenzy of unthinking haste. She packed most of her clothes, telephoned for a Pullman reservation, and rushed off to the station without a thought of her theatre engagement with Lila.

But once she had settled herself on the train, reaction to her impetuous step had brought her face to face with the true aspect of her situation. She had packed so many things, and her note had been so brutally abrupt. Rod would think she had left him—perhaps he would guess that she had discovered his reawakened interest in Lila.

There was still enough faith left in Bertie Lou's heart to foster a hope that Rod could explain why he had lied to her. This hope had grown steadily until she regretted that she hadn't given him a chance to defend himself. Several times she was on the point of sending him a telegram but always her pride stood in the way.

Suppose Rod could explain? Suppose he had found it convenient—a relief, as it were—to have her out of the way?

And surely, if he were innocent, he would be amazed at the suddenness of her departure. He would, or write, frantically-inspired demands for explanations. She would know then how to judge him. She had yet to learn that it is fatal to one's peace of mind or happiness to lay out lines of conduct for other persons to follow.

Rod puzzled and beginning to feel abused, had waited for word from her; had expected it, still respected it, and to avoid any delay in its transmission had sent a reply address with his inquiry regarding her mother's condition.

All Bertie Lou's hopes for a satisfactory explanation fled with his message. She took it up, after a while, put it back in the envelope, and went in to see if her mother was still asleep. She would want to know if Rod had wired.

Bertie Lou's eyes filled with tears at sight of that dear, gentle face with its hair of gray. She wanted to sink down and press her face to the pillow beside it and pour out her heart-break. But the nurse beside the bed put a silencing finger to her lips and Bertie Lou backed away quietly. This was the rest that meant life to her mother—the after-crisis sleep.

The next day she showed her mother the telegram and told her what a fortunate thing it was for Rod to be invited to The Birchess. She had decided, after a restless night, not to mention anything about Rod and Lila.

Her mother knew that Bertie Lou and Lila were now apparently on friendly terms. Bertie Lou's letters revealed this information, also Cyrus' generosity and the splendid future that Rod had with him.

But her mother was too ill to hear the truth now, she reflected. Rod to be invited to The Birchess, that Lila had been so willing to break their luncheon engagement with Lila.

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Her mother was out of danger. However, she was ominously silent regarding her own plans.

When Rod received the telegram he began to feel deeply offended. Why couldn't Bertie Lou have shown more consideration? There was no need to worry now over her mother's condition. Lila sensed his mood when he came to lunch, dog tired from miles of tramping over the wooded hills in which The Birchess nestled. She had opposed it, going off alone but Rod had not minded her. And she was too busy in the ways of men to insist upon accompanying him.

"What's the news?" she asked. She knew he had received a wire just a few minutes before. Rod took it from his pocket and handed it to her. Lila could scarcely conceal her satisfaction on learning that Bertie Lou's plans for returning were not even mentioned.

She handed back the paper, expressing gratification that Mrs. Ward was on her way to recovery. She felt that Rod had no real ground now for objecting to a little gaiety as she telephoned Molly and asked her and Tom to come up for the night.

A neighboring couple also were reached by telephone. They brought an extra girl. That made enough for two tables of bridge. Rod played absently until, after several partners had said things in plain words, Lila suggested clearing the room for dancing.

Rod asked the extra girl to dance but he got a scowl from the dancing member of the neighboring couple that discouraged him. Later, dancing with Lila, it was explained to him that Bankie—so she called Mr. Backs—had a crush on the girl. It was nothing to Rod.

Lila seemed tired. At least the way she relaxed against Rod during the dance suggested it. It was as though he held her in his arms entirely oblivious of their surroundings and the rhythm of the music. Lila let her head sink to his shoulder and then curled one arm around his neck. Presently he heard her sigh, very gently, but unmistakably.

"Tired?" he asked. She ceased dancing and lifted her head. "No," she said; "just thinking."

"Let's sit down and think out loud," Rod suggested. He was weary from unaccustomed exercise and lack of sleep.

"Come out and listen to the frogs," Lila invited, taking his hand and moving toward an open French window. "They make music, really they do."

They sat on a stone bench and listened. "Isn't it peaceful?" Lila said softly. "I wonder how men and women ever got life so complicated when the world they live in is just as simple as it ever was? Can you imagine anything being wrong in this setting?"

"I'm afraid I can," Rod admitted. Lila's hand stole over and covered his.

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are you worrying about?"

It was her trump card. "No, Rod," she said as he hesitated for an answer. "I know you well enough to see that you're hurt. I've watched you struggling along under a lot of debts, trying to make both ends meet, get ahead, and save money to build that house you're always talking about. I've cautioned Bertie Lou many times against throwing money away. But New York went to her head; I'm afraid."

Rod stared at her as she spoke, bewildered at the discrepancy between her statements and Bertie Lou's.

Lila had risen to her feet and was leaning against a white pillar. She looked flawlessly beautiful in the pale moonlight that lent spirituality to her conventionally pretty features. Her hair was dressed to fit her head like a gold cap, and her full throat rose from a lace robe de style gown that was charmingly feminine and revealing.

Rod could not believe she was lying. She spoke so earnestly, almost sadly. "I can't tell you how

sorry I am," she went on, "because if you're not happy, Rod... Her voice trailed off wistfully. Rod rose to make an answer. Why, Lila shouldn't say that! He WAS happy, perfectly happy. He was about to tell her so, when Cyrus joined them, with a demand for Lila to make some sandwiches.

The cook and maid had been given the evening off. The Lorees had not expected to entertain tonight. Cyrus came up and put an arm around Lila's waist and drew her to him. Rod was facing them. What he saw then surprised him beyond words.

(To Be Continued)

Boswell Springs for Sunday chicken dinner, 75c.

COQUILLE GARAGE MEN

PROTEST NIGHT PARKING

(Associated Press Licensed Wire)

MARSHFIELD, Ore., Aug. 7.—

War has broken out between garage owners and other business men of Coquille, Coos county. The council received last night a petition largely signed, asking enforcement of an ordinance which prevents all night parking. Previously about the same number had been attached to petitions asking that the ordinance be revoked. The council took no action.

Ent barbecue sandwiches and live forever. Brand's Road Stand

COOS LOGGERS KILLED

MARSHFIELD, Ore., Aug. 7.—

Frank Shepherd, 24, of Eureka, Cal., was killed when struck by a sapling while falling a tree in the Powers logging camp yesterday. He came here from Eureka two weeks ago.

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



Won't Someone Please Tell 'Em?



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By Blosser



SALESMAN SAM



Sweet of Him



By Small



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CAR OWNER—Don't forget to

call 553 when in need of auto

parts. Sarff's Auto Wrecking

House.

VARE REPORTED BETTER

(Associated Press Licensed Wire)

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., Aug. 7.

—United States Senator-elect, William S. Vare continued toward recovery today following the second

restful night he has spent since he suffered a paralytic stroke last

Wednesday.

NEON SIGNS

Sold Outright

Roy Hufham

Roseburg, Oregon

Fire Hazards

are increased during this time

of the year.