

# Next Time Try the Train . . .

(Continued from page six) manner, with both eyebrows and grin.

"Next time you practice waving at the parachute troops or go in for the more violent type of tear-jerking. . . ." he began.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," I breathed unconvincingly, thinking how wonderful "Lydia and Lynn" would sound together.

"Penny Graham is my name. . . . It's really Penelope, but I've never felt like Penelope.

"Nor looked it," he commented. "Lydia's over there," I announced, hoping that he'd look back on the day and remember my portentous words.

"Lydia?" he mused, grinning again. "Lydia . . . Used to have an old maid aunt named Lydia once. She collected china skunks and named them after the men who kissed her off. . . . Finally got to be around thirteen, so she began collecting rabbit feet.

I giggled, "Well, Lydia doesn't collect skunk, forsooth. Just take a look."

Lynn looked, disinterestedly. Then he twitched the Gable eyebrow again and yawned.

Thinking it might be a wolfish indication, I congratulated myself blissfully as we walked back toward Lydia.

Lydia was smoking "Gabs" and began discoursing learnedly, as we sat down, on the subject of red-tipped cigarettes, their effect on morale, and "How Our Attitude Toward Material Things Will Prove the Downfall of Civilization As We Know It."

"My, how you talk," was Lynn's dry comment.

With a realization that all was

definitely not well, I stemmed the tide of Lydia's flow of verbosity with a violent nudge under the table, and they sat there glaring at one another while I attempted to sparkle. Lynn answered in monosyllables, and Lydia interjected a few sarcastic "Oh's."

Things eventually simmered down until Lynn was rattling along amicably, and Lydia wore a slight smile behind her pancake makeup and curtain of smoke.

The upshot of the deal was that Lynn, who was on a 13-day leave, and staying with some relatives in town, decided to come over that evening and play tennis. Since Lydia didn't seem properly enthusiastic, I waxed effusive.

\* \* \*

**T**HE scene was set. There was Lydia in a candy-stripe pair of shorts, with bows to match, and Lynn, looking almost disgustingly good looking, playing one of the hottest, dirtiest sets of tennis I've ever witnessed. Lynn's jaw was set, and Lydia looked about ready to explode. The score so far was 6-5, 5-6, 6-5, and Lydia is a tennis expert in red capitals.

"What's the trouble, bubble . . . 'bout to burst?" I called out gaily, which was a horrible faux pas. She was, and she did . . . all over the tennis court. Lydia's racked slammed down, and slithered out of her hand to the other side of the net. Lynn began whistling, "Got No Strings . . ."

I didn't give up or lose hope at any time during those harrowing thirteen days, but sometimes I began to wonder if Guadalcanal were half as tough.

That evening ended, as did every other evening of the whole thirteen days, with me as chief arbitrator, and the Lydia-Lynn combo in a state of sullen silence of parrying one another's strictly sarcastic running commentary. It was beyond me. . . . I knew that people who were in love often played hard to get, but Lydia and Lynn were carrying it just a shade too far. No matter how much I tried to find subtle situations in which they could be alone and discover how absolutely "meant for each other" they were, they always ended up smoldering at a distance.

I bombarded Lydia with the perfections of Lynn. I raved to Lynn about the accomplishments of Lydia. They both listened politely enough, but with obvious distaste.

"Awk," commented Lydia. "Hell," said Lynn.

\* \* \*

**S**O it, went, gorgeous, golden carefree days, . . . full of shows, dancing, ping-pong . . . (no more tennis) and gay chatter (alternating monologues by me on things in general, and by Lydia on the subject of "How Our Attitude Toward Material Things Will Prove the Downfall of Civilization As We Know It." Lydia and Lynn always seemed to want me with them every moment. I was flattered but puzzled.

Matters came to a climax on the afternoon of the 13th day when we'd all gone swimming down below the rapids past Sutter's point. Next to those two tall, lithe swimmers I felt like a little pink balloon—round and buoyant.

Lynn, like a blond demi-god, I thought, was reclining on the bank, pulling up new, green grass by the roots. Lydia and I were paddling . . . that is, I was paddling, while she was slithering through the water in a very professional-appearing crawl. I don't

know whatever happened . . . Guess I must have followed Lydia out too far when she began gulping water and threshing frantically at the same time. The last I remember was seeing a terrified look on Lydia's face and thinking that now was Lynn's big chance, as the water closed blackly over my face again.

"Darling, speak to me, please . . ." Lynn was saying to someone nearby. I thought quite smugly, that my scheming had at last achieved its purpose. Lynn and Lydia, the two perfect specimens, had at last realized what they meant to each other. I ventured to peep out from between lowered lids at the touching tableau.

. . . Something was the matter. Lydia was sitting on the edge of the dock swinging her legs and sputtering angrily, while Lynn was leaning over me.

"Why, Lynn. . ." I began uncertainly.

"Don't talk," he said softly, bending down to kiss me.

I didn't, and it was a perfect silence.

\* \* \*

Now that we're married, and everything has been straightened out, Lynn and I have Lydia have Lydia down for weekends quite frequently. He still laughs when I try to find her a perfect specimen, but he's beginning to enjoy listening to "How Our Attitude Toward Material Things Will Prove the Downfall of Civilization As We Know It."

## Alum Gets Ensign Rank In Reserves

Graduating from the United States naval air training center at Corpus Christi, Texas on April 7, Richard Arthur Patrick Jr., former University student, was commissioned an ensign in the United States naval reserve.

Ensign Patrick was a student at the Modesto junior college before he came to the University. He volunteered for flight training last July and received preliminary flight instruction at the Oakland, California, naval air station.

His specialized training at Corpus Christi consisted in instruction in flying the navy's dive bombers.

Ensign Patrick is from Modesto, California.

## Mencken the Divine

(Continued from page six)

At the time Mencken quit the YMCA because he loathed physical exercise, that now revered organization incurred his wrath by having religious discussion. It later got back in his favor when he learned that the Berlin branch served beer.

Mencken's boisterous reminiscences are well worth delving into by anyone who abhors physical exertion, prohibition, cats, opera, and warm beer. There are also some passages that reflect constructive criticism but they are delightfully tempered with cynical spice.—Ted Goodwin.

## Nilssen to Present Northwest Concerts

Oregon's Sigurd Nilssen, bass-baritone and professor of voice, will present three concerts in Washington and eastern Oregon next week. He will sing a group of old English and American songs in Walla Walla, Wash., May 6. On the following evening he will present a program of German, French, Norwegian, and English songs there. Professor Nilssen will repeat the second program in Pendleton Sunday, May 9.

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