

Leap Year Bride

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"It might be good for you. You and Mother haven't had a trip together for years. You're the one who should go with her. But her father shook his head. 'I'd never be able to leave now,' he said. 'I have to think of business.'"

Mrs. Dixon next day added her appeals to her husband's and tried to persuade Cherry to come away with her. It was no use. The girl was firm. She also told her mother she had decided against ordering the gown at Madeline's.

"What I have will do for the places I'm going to wear them," Cherry said. "And I couldn't take the things without letting Dan know about it."

Then I must say I think you're being down right stubborn!"

Cherry laughed. "Call it that if you want to but let's not quarrel about it. By the way, that's a lovely dress you're wearing. Madeline make that?"

The trip to the Massachusetts resort was not definitely settled upon for several days. Then with characteristic abruptness Walter Dixon decided he would accompany his wife and that they would depart the next week.

Cherry was pleased. The decision eased her mind about her mother's wrath and it also settled problems that had been bothering her. The three or four hours she had been spending every day at her parents' home came into her schedule. Each day ended with many things to do and the tasks had piled up rather alarmingly. Then, too, she was learning it is not easy to divide your time, spending half of it amid luxurious surroundings and half counting pennies.

In spite of what her father and mother might say Cherry knew they disapproved of Dan. Though she inquired solicitously about her mother's health she knew Dan was aware of this disapproval.

Yes, Cherry would be glad when she could settle down to her own life. Back in her mind there was the vague fear she would not adjust even to herself—the fear that, ever so slightly, she and Dan might be drifting apart.

"That was too frightful to be recognized,"

Mr. and Mrs. Dixon were to depart Wednesday morning. Monday Cherry telephoned to say that she would not be out that day. She had shopping to do and several errands. If Martin could come for her early the following day she would spend all afternoon at Briarwood.

She hung up the receiver with a sense of relief. Pinky scampered across her path and she picked up the kitten and held his fur against her cheek.

"You've been neglected, Pinky," she announced. "But we're going to change that. Goodness, how you're growing!"

Pinky arched his back, poked at the collar of Cherry's dress with one paw, and seemed to enjoy the new game.

She put him down again and the kitten chased across the floor after imaginary plunder.

The shopping Cherry had to do consisted entirely of purchases from a 5-and-10-cent store. Mrs. Dixon, who lived upstairs, had bought some dishes there and Cherry wanted some like them. The loss of dishes by breakage during her first month of housekeeping had been alarmingly high. She also needed a saucepan to replace one that had burned

through, some tea towels and a glass top for the coffee percolator.

At 2:30 she pulled on the last year's Panama with the black band around it, picked up her purse and gloves and left the apartment.

There was a long wait before the street car came clattering along.

Blistering hot sunshine poured down on Cherry's neck and arms. There was no shelter. She had to stand in the sun and then send them up again like heat from a furnace. Her handkerchief was limp long before the car arrived.

When it finally came and Cherry climbed aboard there was only room to stand with the other perspiring straphangers. The motion of the car created a breeze, however, and she was grateful for it.

"It's lucky Mother's leaving on Wednesday," the girl thought. "We're certainly in for a heat wave!"

She had a fleeting picture of her parents' home, Briarwood, with its lawn like clipped velvet, the breeze rustling through its stately trees, the garden, broad porches and cool shaded rooms.

Cherry sighed and wiped her forehead again. It was going to be even hotter down town.

The car jolted on. The weather was showing its effects on the dispositions of passengers. Men and women pushed by each other impatiently. When they finally reached Twelfth street and Central avenue there was a general scramble to be out first. Cherry hung back purposefully and was among the last to leave.

It was a block's walk to the 5-and-10 store. Cherry had been there only a few times. The dozens of counters with their apparently unlimited assortment of articles still amazed her. She became confused and could not find the household department until a young man directed her.

She bought the saucepans and moved on to the china counters.

It was 45 minutes later when Cherry finally emerged from the store. Both of her arms were filled with bundles. She was conscious that she must be very careful of the dishes. Her nose and cheeks were glowing, her hat pushed every. The dress that had been fresh when she left home was rumpled and soiled now.

She was tempted to stop in a drug store for a soda but the bundles disuaded her.

"If I put them down," she told herself, "I'll never be able to manage them again."

She was on her way to the car stop when a clear, high-pitched voice interrupted her. Cherry turned.

"Why, Gretchen, hello!"

"Cherry Dixon! Oh, excuse me—I keep forgetting you're married. Phillips, isn't it? What on earth have you been doing? My dear, I didn't know you! All those peck-ups—"

Cherry's cheeks had been hot before. Now they were flaming. "Shopping," she said. "Some things I wanted in a hurry and couldn't wait to have delivered. But what are you doing down town on a day like this?"

Gretchen Alden frowned. She was dressed in silk, the color of creme de menthe. Her hat and sandals matched exactly. Not a single strand of her lovely golden hair was out of place.

"Frightful, isn't it?" she asked. "I'm simply melted. But you see we're leaving for Lake Louise and I had to have some fittings. I'm getting three of the sweetest frocks—"

She described them fluently. Cherry's arm was becoming cramped with her bundles but there was nothing to do but listen.

"Cherry, my dear," the other girl wound up, "mother and I are giving a little musicale Sunday evening. Awfully informal, you know. That good-looking violinist, Carl van Dyke, is going to play. Won't you come and bring your husband? I'm dying to meet him!"

"I'll see," Cherry agreed. "I'm not sure what our plans are. Well, I must be on my way."

"Can't I give you a lift?" Gretchen urged. "I'm meeting Mother with the car at 5—"

Cherry shook her head. "No thanks," she said. "I'll call you later about Sunday."

As she rode home (luckily having secured a seat on the street car), Cherry entertained herself with a vision of Dan at one of Gretchen Alden's musicales.

She gave him an amusing version of her afternoon's adventure over the dinner table. Afterward Dan helped wash and put away the dishes. They were finishing the last of them when there was a knock at the door.

"I'll answer," Cherry said. She crossed the room and opened the door. A moment later she cried, "Why, Father—"

Daily Cross-Word Puzzle

Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

ACROSS
1. Close forcibly
2. Astound
3. Increased in size
4. Expectant anticipation
5. Title of address
6. Staff officer
7. Sash-shaped
8. Oppress with cars
9. Dismayed by straight lines
10. Conclude
11. Before
12. Of the:
13. French ship's prison
14. Their:
15. French ox
16. Ostrich
17. Island in the Mediterranean
18. That man
19. Moist with perspiration
20. To one side
21. Cereal grass
22. French annuity
23. Day back
24. Thus
25. Icelandic writings
26. Gaseous
27. Beam
28. Anatomical
29. Tissue
30. Coterie
31. Beast of burden
32. Golf term
33. Introduced by way of explanation
34. One who incites to evil
35. Dickens character
36. One: prefix
37. Sun-dried brick
38. The herb dill
39. Pitcher
40. Meaning
41. Army meal
42. Coast
43. Sweetheart
44. Quick
45. Liquor
46. Plants used as a sign
47. The European song thrush
48. Arabian sea-port
49. Improvised
50. Blockade in the Sudan
51. Pheasant
52. Kind of cheese
53. High, pointed hill
54. Paradise
55. Take one's way
56. Swiss canton
57. Recall in the form of an idea
58. Avaricious
59. Thoroughfare
60. Leaves
61. Cards held at a deal
62. Feminine name
63. Affirmative
64. votes
65. Female horse
66. Imitator
67. Boys
68. Exclamation
69. Garland
70. As far as
71. Grapes of a certain sort
72. Formal procession
73. Imperfect or slightly damaged paper
74. Slender final
75. Admirers of position
76. Explode
77. Fathers
78. Drive away, as an eat
79. Note the speed of
80. Sumcient:
81. Ancient
82. slave
83. English school
84. Kind of cheese
85. High, pointed hill

DOWN
1. Coast
2. Sweetheart
3. Quick
4. Liquor
5. Plants used as a sign
6. The European song thrush
7. Arabian sea-port
8. Improvised
9. Blockade in the Sudan
10. Pheasant
11. Pheasant
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