

Handmade Rainbows

By MRS. HARRY PUGH SMITH
© MC CLURE W.N.U. Service

INSTALLMENT SEVEN—The Story So Far

The depression has hit the Maguire family though Mike Maguire, happy-go-lucky editor and mayor of Covington, is serene. His daughter Kathleen is irritated, however, over several things. Mrs. Newsom would like her son, Jaid to marry Connie Mays, the banker's

CHAPTER IX

Alec Maguire needed another drink. He needed it badly. Liquor gave him a quick pick-up. But unfortunately liquor had a mean trick of dying on him too soon. And the letdown was terrific.

"Isn't the music gorgeous?" burred Myra.

Alec regarded her sourly. He didn't want to, but quite suddenly he saw every line about her loose rouged mouth. Her hair was metallic yellow, but next to the roots it was drab. Her under chin sagged unless she held it well up. But tomorrow would be another day, reflected Alec bitterly. With absolutely nothing to do. While his nerves crawled with boredom. At least Myra provided action.

She had to be doing something every minute. That was why she liked her playmates young. Maturer men occasionally had jobs to go to. Myra herself had no serious occupation except her own amusement. And she was perfectly willing to pay the piper for the privilege of calling the tune.

"I've got to have another shot before I do a rhumba," muttered Alec when the music ended.

He left Myra to reinjoin their party as best she could and made his way a little blindly toward the exit. Marigold Gardens had no license to sell intoxicating beverages. So everybody brought his own. It was quite like good old before-repeal days. Myra always parked a quart or two with her car. She thought Alec might have asked her to go along if he wanted a snort. He was a queer youngster. Brilliant but moody, and his temper was as erratic as a trick cigarette lighter. Myra had never quite figured him out. Perhaps that was why he intrigued her.

Alec had not asked Myra to share her own liquor because he wanted to be rid of her. He had to do something which he dreaded. Myra would think it was a scream if she knew. She would tell the world so. Alec's face looked a little haunted. It was a ridiculous jam for him to have got into. It was all Myra's fault anyway. If she hadn't dared him and if he hadn't been three sheets in the wind, it could never have happened. He might be pretty thoroughly no good, but he wasn't at heart that rotten. At least he hoped not.

"Hell!" muttered Alec Maguire to himself and jerked open the door of the telephone booth.

He continued to frown at the blank wall before him as he dialed a number. Kathleen cleared her throat. At least she and Alec always fought fair. He whirled, recognized her, smothered an oath and hung up the receiver before his connection could be completed.

"If it isn't little sister," he sneered. "Out slumming with Hot Shot Mays and the like of that. I thought you had more sense. I had to look twice when you came in. Just couldn't believe the old eyesight."

"That was alcohol, not shock, Buddy."

Alec went very red. "One in the family's enough," he muttered.

"Why don't you cut it out then?"

"Gene Mays never did a girl's rep any good."

"Maybe you think I like having people refer to my brother as the Boone divorcee's latest gigolo."

The moment she spat out the word Kathleen was sorry. Alec went so white she was frightened.

"All right," he said in a thickened voice, "you win. I'm putrid. I'm not fit to open my trap no matter what you do. I admit it. And that's that. Now will you beat it? I've got to telephone and I didn't invite an audience."

Kathleen's lips quivered. "I didn't mean it, Alec. But, gee, Buddy, it breaks my heart when you're like this."

Alec looked away. His handsome boyish face was haggard, his black eyes a little desperate. "I'm not drunk now if that's what you mean," he said gruffly.

"I know. But—don't go back in there, Alec. Cut that bunch and surprise Mother by turning up at a decent hour for once."

"Yeah, and lie awake till daylight, rolling and tossing because I'm too gosh-awful blue to sleep," he said bitterly. "What time is it?"

"Nine-fifteen by my watch and chain though I don't guarantee it," said Kathleen with a rueful grin at the wrist watch which she had won with a prize essay on the beauty of being altruistic in a grossly material world.

Alec groaned. "Blow," he said sharply.

Kathleen regarded him with narrowed eyes. "You may as well tell me what it's all about," she said firmly, "because I'm sticking till you do."

Alec again colored violently. "You won't like it. But if you must have it, you must. We were all pretty well liquored up this afternoon and Myra wanted to do something different, for a thrill. So she dared me to call up somebody and make a date for tonight."

"Who?"

"Lou Knight."

daughter, though he is engaged to Shirley, Kathleen's sister. Tom, Kathleen's brother, is hard hit by the slump in real estate, and his wife, Mary Ella, secretary, talks of Reno. A younger brother, Alec, unable to get a job, is taking up with a flashy blonde, much older than he. Ritchie Graham, a stranger, helps Kathleen fix a flat and kisses her. He, too, is a newspaper man—and without a job. So she goes to a dance with Gene Mays though she does not like him.

Kathleen thinks she dislikes Ritchie.

Near the railroad shops there was a business street of sorts. It consisted mainly of cheap eating places, squalid second-hand furniture stores, pawnshops, small grimy groceries and beer joints. Upstairs were flats. Dinky dilapidated places with shaky floors and flimsy walls and no modern conveniences. Fire traps Mike was always calling them and attempting to arouse an inert public to demand their destruction. Mike's son, tramping up the steep rickety staircase which mounted from outside, cursed under his breath. How had he ever landed himself in such a mess? Even drunk he should have had more sense, to say nothing of decency.

CHAPTER X

Covington was small enough for everybody to know practically everyone else by sight—and gossip. Alec had vaguely known old Pete Knight's little girl all her life although he didn't remember ever having spoken to her before today. They had gone to the same public school because until recently the town had only the one. But they had never been in the same class or even in the same room. Alec thought Lou was about seventeen, three years younger than himself.

Pete Knight was Covington's bad example. He came originally from good stock, or so it was generally believed. At least when he first blew into town some fourteen years before, he gave evidence of having been at one time a gentleman. Even yet traces of a former gentility showed through his maudlin speech. But somewhere the man had lost hold of himself. Mike had a theory that Pete Knight had taken a knock-out blow in some fairer existence which left him punch-drunk, so that he couldn't pick himself up again.

But if so, he never referred to it. And he resented any attempt at prying into his past—if he had one. Certainly he had no present or future. He must have been about thirty when he dropped off a freight train in Covington and he had been steadily drinking himself to death ever since. Several months after his arrival Lou appeared. She was barely toddling. A queer forlorn little type even then, who had made the trip in the care of successive railroad conductors.

He worked, when he wasn't on a spree, at anything he could find to do from washing dishes in a greasy spoon restaurant to hauling garbage for the city. But most of his earnings went for whiskey with which further to befuddle his already foggy brain. And for several years he had been a physical as well as a moral wreck. But when he was in his cups he presented a tragically ludicrous figure. The sort small boys loved to follow and torment with rocks or snowballs just to hear him roar like a baited and bewildered trapped bear.

"Come," said a small husky voice when Alec rapped at one of the battered doors which lined the long dingy upstairs corridor.

The girl, standing a little beyond the scarred kitchen table, reminded him uncomfortably of a small hunted animal. The flat had only two rooms and was depressingly scant of furniture. But at least an effort had been made to retrieve the ugliness of dark cracked walls and narrow broken-paned windows. A straggling geranium grew in a tin coffee can and the rusty cook stove had been polished.

"Hello," said Lou Knight.

She was very thin and her blue eyes were enormous in her small wan face. She had thick pale brown hair, a shy nervous mouth and little rouged hands that kept twisting at her side. Her glance begged Alec not to laugh. At the room, or at her, or at her sleazy blue silk dress which pulled in places, revealing raw seams, and which bagged in others. But Alec had never felt less like laughing. She was such a pathetic little scrap. So dreadfully shy. So afraid of sneers and blows because life had handed her little else.

"Ready?" he demanded awkwardly. She nodded. And he went on, trying desperately to sound natural.

"Sorry I was late. But if we hurry, I think we can just make the last show."

She said nothing. But he saw the cords working in her thin little neck. She was scared to death. Alec's throat hurt at the look in her eyes. She stumbled on the stair from sheer nervousness and he put out his hand to steady her. But she caught her breath sharply and flinched away. Alec flushed. Had she thought he was going to hit her? He hated himself for being so painfully aware of her shabby little slippers which had scuffed, run-down spike heels. He supposed he was a snob, but the hardest thing he had ever done in his life was to walk through the crowd of hangers-on outside the Covington Airdrome and purchase a couple of tickets for himself and Lou Knight. Even after he was safely inside where there were no lights his handsome young face burned.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"She'll probably think she raised her son to be an idiot."

raised her son to be an idiot, but I believe she'd prefer that to a cad."

Alec drew a long breath. "I'll never live it down," he muttered. "But here goes." He dialed his number and this time he waited for his connection.

"This is Alec Maguire," he said doggedly into the receiver. "Will you please send somebody upstairs with a message to Lou Knight? Tell her I've been unavoidably detained and am going to be a little late, but I'll be there."

He turned away from the telephone. "I hope you're satisfied," he growled.

He did not return to the ballroom. Kathleen watched him going sulkily out the entrance, and didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. He was lucky enough to catch a ride with Len Woods and Sylvia Mason who had decided to move on elsewhere. They set him down on Main Street and, still scowling, Alec crossed the railroad tracks and made for that unlovely part of town against which Mike was always crusading in the Clarion's editorial page, where one row of ugly shotgun houses, all precisely alike, buttled against another and the streets were unpaved and dusty, the yards small and cluttered and bare.

Myra would be furious, Alec knew that. But the stimulation of the alcohol which he had consumed earlier in the night had yielded to black depression, and in his present humor he did not much care what Myra elected to do about his cavalier desertion. Nevertheless he was aware that he would feel differently the next day when the hours stretched interminably before him and he had nothing to do but think. The sort of thoughts that had been driving him crazy since he took his degree at midyear and found himself adrift in a world that yawned when he begged for his chance. Just a chance, that was all he asked. A chance to do things. Big constructive things such as he had dreamed of.

"God!" said Alec Maguire to himself.

THIS IS A
W.N.U. SUPERIOR
SERIAL
A MARK OF FINE FICTION

Kathleen Norris Says:

When Your Husband Falls in Love

(Bell Syndicate—WNU Service.)



Also working there is a woman, very beautiful, and unscrupulous. She has my husband completely bewitched.

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

WHEN a man, after twenty years of marriage, gets tired of his wife, neglects her, hurts and insults her, and openly admits that he wants to be freed to marry another woman, what is the wife to do?

This isn't a new problem, but the shock and helplessness of it make it seem eternally new to every woman to whom it comes. Sometimes this shock, coming to her at a bad physical moment, almost upsets her reason for a time.

Such a danger seems to me very close to Emily Baker, who writes me from a big Massachusetts manufacturing town. Emily will be fortunate if she can hold to her reason and keep her balance in the months ahead. If she can, I think I can promise her happiness and serenity when this time has gone by.

A Quarter Century of Work.

Emily is 50; she has been married 27 years. She has a married daughter living in the West; a married son living near her; and a young daughter and son still at home. She married for love, worked hard as a young wife and mother, never had a servant until a few years ago. For a whole quarter century she washed, cooked, dusted, made beds, dressed babies, served meals, helped school-children with their lessons, packed picnic baskets, trimmed Christmas trees.

"Tom always came first with me," says her tear-stained letter. "Dinner every night included something that 'Daddy' especially liked, the children must be respectful, considerate of him when he was tired, they must remember his birthday. They all love him dearly, as indeed I do—or did."

"My younger son, now called by the draft, is closely devoted to his mother. But my unmarried daughter, Alida, thinks her father can do no wrong. And he is doing wrong now, my good, patient, generous husband of a few years ago. Alida works in his office, and also working there is a woman some 10 years older than she, divorced, with a boy of five, very beautiful and unscrupulous. She has my husband completely bewitched."

Feels Old—Useless.

"He began by being irritable and unreasonable with me, and impatient because I was so often nervous, tired, and sensitive. I feel myself to be old, gray, useless and homely these days, and what I see in my mirror only confirms the impressions. But I need tenderness so, and the security of my home! And those are just the things he proposes to take away. He is handsome, rosy, strong and young at 53, and seems years younger than I."

"Tom wants a divorce. He wants to bring his young wife here and have her keep house for him and Alida, when Don goes to camp in June and I go west to visit my daughter when her baby comes. He says I am to go to Reno, stay with Betty as long as I like, 'visit' anywhere I choose. I cannot expect to you the forlornness of this prospect without him and without any one of the children, who have been all my world for so many years! I am not a baby, I am not pitying myself, but under no circumstances could I compete in beauty and charm with a fresh girl of 28, who is flattering Tom to the point when he is a complete fool over her."

Alida is the sensible, practical, outspoken type. Her attitude is that

Daughter's attitude is that as nobody's happy under the present arrangement why not break it all up and try the new one?

LOST AFFECTION

What would you do if your husband fell in love with another woman? Would you give him up, or would you live a heart-breaking existence, knowing he no longer cared for you? Kathleen Norris offers a far happier solution to a woman who has to face this problem after 27 years of married life.

She loves both parents, but that as Joan is madly in love with Daddy and Daddy with Joan, and as nobody's happy under the present arrangement why not break it all up and try the new one? When I cry about this, and I can't help crying, she says, 'Oh, now, Mother, men hate women to cry! Brace up. It'll all come out right. You wouldn't want to hold Daddy if he wanted to be free, would you?'

"I don't know what I want. Shame and pain and memories of the days when my babies and husband loved and needed me are so mixed up in my heart that I seem half-crazy. Will you tell me what to do? Must I surrender everything these years have meant to me to 'play the game'?"

The Path to Follow.

My dear Emily, playing the game in this case means continuing in your own home and your own life, ignoring what you can of insult or hurt, enduring the rest, keeping yourself as calm and friendly as if none of these storms was raging over you, and showing to an ungrateful man the patience and kindness that may be obtained in only one way: the way of constant prayer.

What Tom is doing, thinking, asking and planning is not your immediate concern. What YOU do, think and plan most emphatically is. See that you make the most of yourself in every way. Even a middle-aged woman can be a pleasant sight, if she is freshly and appropriately dressed; even gray hair is charming if it is brushed to silky brightness and trimly braided or curled. Your interest in books, current events, radio programs, gardens and flower arrangements, the supervision of meals, the details of club or hospital, prison or charity or orphanage responsibilities, will reflect itself in a brighter outlook on your own fortunate life. Brush aside the absurdity of a man of 53 embarking upon a new love adventure, tell Alida you will not discuss it, and assume once and for all the dignity to which your useful and beloved years entitle you.

Years of Harvest Time Ahead.

By all means visit the married daughter and welcome the grandchild. Make it a long visit. Make much of Tom's grandfatherhood; perhaps they will name the baby for Tom. Write Tom reports, ask Alida for news of the household—in short, proceed as nearly as you can along normal lines. Another few months or a year at most will see your physical and mental crisis ended, and you will be in for years of health and activity and high spirits. The fifties are wonderful years; to a woman like yourself, who has earned the right to spend her leisure in the ways she likes best, they are a golden harvest time.

But to weather this particular time, you must steel yourself to bear your husband's selfish inconsiderateness. He will come back, and you will forgive him. And if the crystal vase of those early years of trust and devotion has been broken, it is for you to show the world that the cracks weren't very serious, that they could be mended, and that you meant it when you said, 'way back in 1914, 'for better or for worse.'

THINGS for You TO MAKE



Transfer Z9333

ENRICH a protective chair set with this graceful waterlily motif. The leaves and stems are to be applied in green; pastel blooms and a basket of brown are embroidered. You'll be proud to

display this easy-to-make set to your friends.

Matching sets for divan and chairs may be made from transfer Z9333, 15 cents, since it is one of the new improved hot iron transfers which will stamp more than once. This could also be used for an attractive buffet set. Send your order to:

AUNT MARTHA
Kansas City, Mo.
Box 166-W
Enclose 15 cents for each pattern desired. Pattern No.
Name
Address

Self-Denial

It is the abnegation of self which has wrought out all that is noble, all that is good, all that is useful, nearly all that is ornamental in the world.—Whyte-Melville.

If you bake at home, use
FLEISCHMANN'S FRESH YEAST

RICHER in VITAMINS

The Household Favorite of Four Generations!

FLEISCHMANN'S YEAST
All the benefits of fresh yeast.
High vitamin values.
Vitamin A—3100 Units (per 1/2 lb.)
Vitamin B—150 Units (per 1/2 lb.)
Vitamin C—400 Units (per 1/2 lb.)
Vitamin D—40-50 Units (per 1/2 lb.)
With Calcium in Tapioca Flour and added Vitamin A.
Take two cakes daily.

Disgusting Brute
He who beats his beast would beat me if he durst.

Inwardly Borne
Great joys, like great griefs, are silent.—Marmion.

CHECK UP ON VITAMIN C

It's one you need fresh daily!

Get it deliciously from fresh orange juice!

You cannot "store up" vitamin C in your body. That's why you need a fresh and full supply each day to help you look and feel and do your best!

It's hard to get enough unless you have an abundance of citrus fruits. But it's easy with orange juice—an excellent, natural source! Eight ounces supplies all the vitamin C you normally need each day—plus valuable amounts of vitamins A, B₁ and G; calcium and other minerals.

Enjoy a BIG glass every morning. Make it with trademarked Sunkist Oranges, the finest from 14,000 cooperating California-Arizona growers. Best for Juice—and Every use! Copyright, 1941, California Fruit Growers Exchange

Hedda Hopper's Hollywood—CBS, 6:15 P.M., E.D.S.T.—Mon., Wed., Fri.

Sunkist CALIFORNIA ORANGES

Best for Juice—and Every use!

YOUR TOWN—YOUR STORES

Our community includes the farm homes surrounding the town. The town stores are there for the accommodation and to serve the people of our farm homes. The merchants who advertise "specials" are merchants who are sure they can meet all competition in both quality and prices.