

# Handmade Rainbows

By Mrs. HARRY PUGH SMITH  
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## INSTALLMENT THIRTEEN—The Story So Far

This is the story of an American family in the depression years. Laura Maguire, wife of Mike, happy-go-lucky editor and mayor of Covington, is mother of four children:

Tom, whose real estate job in the big city nearby peters out and he returns to a smaller job in Covington after separating from Mary Etta, his wife, secretary to a big shot, who refuses to give

### CHAPTER XVIII—Continued

"Where do we go from here?" demanded Connie.

The fire was no longer theatrical and Connie was ready to move on to something else. But Shirley had only one desire. To get away. Away from the sight of Connie Mays' thin predatory hands which were always touching Laird caressingly.

"I'm hungry," announced Lance Ferguson suddenly.

Connie leaped at any excuse to prolong the evening. "So am I," she said. "I could eat a boiled cow."

Shirley sighed. "There isn't a decent sandwich joint in town since Bill's place sold out," objected Laird.

"You're telling us," glibbed Connie. Shirley hesitated.

"You can all come home with me if you like," she said wearily. "I can always find something in the old ice box."

"Saved!" exclaimed Lance with enthusiasm. "Shirley's got the world beat at working up a snack."

"Sure she has," agreed Laird in a tired, cross voice. "And everybody's imposed on her that way for years. But I happen to know that Shirley has to wash up after the jamboree. And I don't suppose she enjoys having the dirty work pushed off on her any more than you would."

"Sorry I can't ask you to our house," Connie declared coolly, "but cook simply blows a fuse if anybody messes around in her kitchen. And that's one thing Mother will not stand for. We can turn the hose on the grand piano and build a fire under the family portraits, but God help anyone who offends our cook!"

"I guess it's up to you, Shirley," murmured Lance.

"It is not," said Laird sharply. "We'll try Joe's."

"That dump!" objected Connie. "It's no worse than the rest."

Only that wasn't saying much. Joe's Sandwich Shop was conveniently located on the main highway at the edge of town but it had little else to recommend it. Joe himself was a small wilted unhappy looking Italian who came hurriedly out of his living quarters at the rear where he had evidently been asleep.

They sat down at stools before the long dingy counter because the tables in the front were discouragingly spotty.

"Did you ever try putting your cold drinks on ice, Joe?" complained Connie with irritation. "Wow! This tastes like dish water."

Joe again spread apathetic hands. "No make money. Glad sell out. Anybody wants buy nice sandwich joint reasonable?"

"God forbid!" cried Connie, and Lance sniggered.

"Money could be made in a place like this if it was run right," protested Laird.

"Man and wife make living here if both work," contributed Joe. "Me, I do verra well before Margarita die." His black eyes looked suddenly tragic. "Since she go I no got heart to keep things right. I want to get away. Make fresh start. Two hundred dollars and I walk out door. Leave everything. Stove, stools, tables, ice box and good bed and shower bath in back room."

"There's your chance, Laird," giggled Connie.

"Provided that I had two hundred dollars, which I haven't," he said. "No buy?" inquired Joe with disappointment.

Connie and Lance laughed. Only Shirley didn't laugh. All the way home Connie was witty at Laird's expense. She said if he bought Joe out he might some day become the Hamburger King of Covington.

### CHAPTER XIX

It was like Connie to maneuver so as to drop Shirley before she did the others. Her lovely face was white when she walked into the living room. Laura was waiting up for Mike. She explained almost curiously about Lou. Shirley stared at her.

"Alec's been running around with her. Oh, Mother."

Laura's eyebrows puckered. "I hope by morning I can think it's funny," she said, grimly.

Shirley sighed. "You must get terribly tired of us sometimes, always stirring up a fresh batch of trouble for you to worry over."

Laura glanced at her curiously. "It's better to live with difficulty than stagnate."

"Yes, oh, yes!" cried the girl in a stifled voice.

She turned away, but not before Laura had seen her eyes.

"You do remind me of Great-grandmother Ashe," said Laura suddenly.

She walked over to the old-fashioned desk in one corner and, opening a drawer, took out a small faded miniature. It had originally been worn on a gold chain. But the frail links had long since been broken and lost. The painting was blurred

up her job. Alec, who can't get a job and is running around with a flashy divorcee. On a bet, he dates Lou Knight, the town drunk's daughter.

Shirley, engaged to Laird Newsom, who is out of work since his father gave up his factory to stop losses. Ma Newsom wants him to marry Connie Mays, the banker's daughter.

with age, yet Shirley might have sat for the lovely sensitive girl who looked back at her from the narrow flange frame.

"She was rather remarkable, wasn't she, Mother?"

Laura carefully did not look at her daughter.

"She was a great belle back in Virginia. But she fell in love with Great-grandfather Ashe who had nothing except youth and a fiery heart to recommend him. Her parents promised to disinherit her if she married him. But she did. They had two saddle horses and a bag of cheap trinkets between them when they eloped to the West. He started a small trading post. She lived in the rear and clerked in the store.

She bore him five children and her family never spoke to her again although Great-grandfather built up one of the largest mercantile businesses in the Southwest and died a comparatively rich man. She spent her later years in a mansion. She always looked fragile and useless. But to the last she said she was happiest when she cooked and scrubbed for her man and sold flour and sugar and coffee between times over a counter."

Shirley looked fixedly at her mother. "Would you have let anything keep you from marrying Mike?"

"Nothing short of sudden death," said Laura.

Shirley turned away but she took the miniature with her. She fell asleep with it against her cheek.

Alec Maguire was down to breakfast with the rest the following

morning. Laura found him at the table when she and Shirley brought in the toast. Tom and Mike were eagerly discussing the small model homes Tom hoped to build and sell in Covington. Apparently Alec was absorbed in their conversation. Actually he was listening painfully for a step on the stairs. Laura saw him go quite white when he heard Lou's voice.

They all did their best to put Lou at her ease. But she answered only in monosyllables and rarely raised her eyes from her plate. Even Mike could not charm a smile to her small wan face. She never looked at Alec and he was unusually silent. But Laura felt him watching them all fiercely as if he was afraid someone would laugh. Laura's heart ached. The girl was anything but laughable.

Kathleen and Tom and Mike went off to work together. Laura thought Tom looked ghastly, as if he hadn't slept. Lou timidly offered to help clear the table. It was Laura's instinct to refuse. Everything in her resented the girl. But Alec's eyes glared at her with feverish pleading, and so Laura swallowed hard and said of course Lou could assist with the dishes. Alec snatched up his hat and announced he had to see a man about a dog. He vanished toward town. Lou's eyes followed him out of sight as if she longed to run after him and beg him not to desert her.

Laura sighed. It was impossible not to feel sorry for the poor child. She was so painfully shy, so fearful of arousing displeasure. Every time Laura spoke, Lou started. Once she dropped a cheap teacup and broke it. Her distress was embarrassing. Laura was not used to being treated like an ogre. But it was plain that Lou was terrified of her. She wanted to help with the housework, but she was too nervous to be anything but awkward. Laura began to feel a little distracted.

"I'm going to town, Mother," said Shirley when they had finished with the kitchen.

Laura nodded absently. She was wondering what on earth was the

Kathleen, society editor on her father's paper, who thinks her father and Ritchie Graham, his assistant, are foolish to invite Mays' threat to break the paper. At a swimming party she is saved by Ritchie, who tells her she loves her. She says she hates him. At a fire in the tenement district, Alec sees the town drunk die rescuing a crippled boy. He takes Lou to his mother's home.

fair thing to do with a homeless waif which one's son had dragged up on one's doorstep. Shirley gave her mother a strangely wistful look, but for once Laura was too preoccupied to notice.

"Can't I make the beds upstairs, Mrs. Maguire?" inquired Lou timidly.

"Yes of course, if you like," said Laura.

Shirley turned away. She took the short cut across the vacant lot. It was a warm May morning but Shirley's hands felt cold. The diamond on her ring finger flashed in the sun. Shirley regarded it somberly. The jeweler in the shop down town looked unhappy.

"Diamonds will come back as strong as ever some day. Are you sure you want to sell?"

"How much?"

"A hundred and a quarter." Shirley stared at him dully. It was not enough. She bit back a sob. What a fool she had been to think this might be the way out. She must have been mad last night. Then suddenly she thought of a girl in a miniature, a proud, lovely fastidious girl who had let nothing balk her of her birthright.

"All right," said Shirley sharply, and tucked the crisp new bills into her hand-bag.

Joe, the small mournful-eyed Italian, glanced up quickly from the counter which he was listlessly wiping with a grimy cloth.

"You think maybe you buy me out?" he cried eagerly. "Gee, that swell! Man in here early this morning see about same thing. But he no got money enough."

Shirley's lips tightened. She didn't explain that she hadn't enough money either. Joe was undoubtedly eager to unload and people in a pinch have been known to take less. She let him show her around. But she did not pay a lot of attention to Joe's sales argument. She used her own eyes. The location was good. The small frame building stood just outside the town on the busiest highway and there was ample parking space. A big water oak made a graceful sunshade. A small spring, discouraged by rubbish, bubbled at the side.

She had to admit that the interior of the place was depressing. Dingy, dirty and unattractive. But she had a stubborn conviction that a good scouring and a few buckets of paint would work miracles. The range was in good shape, only it too needed a thorough cleaning. The cooking utensils were burned black, the china chipped and ugly, the glasses heavy and dull. Lank dispirited curtains flapped dejectedly at fly-specked windows.

The back room had evidently degenerated into a catchall for junk during Joe's sketchy term of house-keeping. But among the litter and dirt and confusion Shirley unearthed a good iron bed, a cheap pine dresser, a couple of sturdy chairs and an unpainted kitchen table, to say nothing of a convenient clothes closet now stuffed with old bottles and rags.

Shirley stood for a long time on the rear step.

Was she insane? She didn't know. But she had an idea everyone would think so. Joe insisted that if a man and his wife both worked, they could make a living in the place. Shirley thought of her Great-grandmother Ashe who had clerked in a store and made a home behind it. Somehow Shirley felt that she too could pioneer if only Laird agreed. But would he? Her throat ached. Had he rather go on as they were going? Tortured, miserable, frustrated! Burning up their love with futility. She did not know. He might sneer at this solution to their problem. He might prefer to be a parasite on his father's rest of his life.

Jaird was not lazy. But he was proud and sensitive. And peddling hamburgers with his wife's assistance was a far cry from the role he had meant to play in life. Then there was Connie Mays who asked nothing but a chance to marry Laird and convulse him with luxury. Connie's husband would automatically become vice president of her father's bank or something equally scintillating. Shirley's slim throat locked. Was she a fool to think Laird might prefer her to all that?

In the front room she heard Joe exclaiming excitedly, "Back again? Maybe you raise the money."

"I couldn't."

Shirley could not see the speaker, but she recognized the voice and her heart backed up. It was Laird.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



THOSE looking for further late summer and early autumn excitement should find what they want in the battle for the batting championship of the American league between its two best hitters—Ted Williams of the Red Sox and Joe DiMaggio of the Yankees. Heath, Culbrenne or possibly some other son of swat may upset this combination—but we doubt it.

Williams and DiMag are the two A. L. standouts and they still have the better part of three months left in which to prove their places in polite baseball society.

DiMaggio's brilliant consecutive hitting streak has given the San Francisco entry most of the publicity lately, but the gangling kid from San Diego and Boston is still far out in front when it comes to the main figures.

Anyone who can reach the half-way mark over .400, as Williams did, knows how to handle ash furniture. And even the excellent DiMag will have to keep on swinging his mace effectively to catch or pass the tall, relaxed entry from the Red Sox reservation.

Looking Back

How do the two compare at this spot along the pennant road? Here is DiMaggio's five-year Yankee record through 1940: 1936—.323; 1937—.346; 1938—.324; 1939—.381; 1940—.352; grand average—.343.

Here is Ted Williams' record for his two complete years: 1939—.327; 1940—.344; average—.336.

But up through the halfway stretch of 1941 Williams is now in front, counting the games both have played under the big tent.

Both Williams and DiMaggio can be listed high in the natural hitting class. One of the main features of DiMaggio's base-hit ability is perfect wrist action. The DiMag has a pair of cocked wrists that carry both power and control.

Too many hitters are body and arm swingers. DiMaggio, well balanced on both feet, lets his body work with his hands, but that brace of cocked wrists deliver most of the poison.

The main feature of Ted Williams' bat swinging is his almost complete lack of tension. Williams won't be 23 until October, but he still acts with the ease and confidence of a veteran who has been through many baseball wars. In this respect he reminds you of Napoleon Lajoie. Larry at the plate looked as loose as ashes. He was apparently indifferent as he waited for the pitch.

"You either hit it or you don't," Larry told me years ago. "Why bother about it? Just take your cut."

The fact might be mentioned here that with this modern lively ball Lajoie, a smoking line hitter with the old one, would soon have several hospitals full of crippled infielders who happened to be in the line of fire.

Another Hot Match

With Williams and DiMaggio grabbing off most of the wild laurel sprigs in the American league, you can look for another hot scramble in the N. L. between Pete Reiser of the Dodgers and Johnny Mize of the Cardinals.

It might interest you to know, if you care for the succulent statistics in baseball, that Johnny Mize's five-year average with the Cardinals is now .339 up through 1940—just four points below DiMaggio's mark for the same span.

Big John is one of the top hitters of his time. Ball players through the South this last spring all picked him as the best hitter in the older league. Mize hails from Demarest, Ga., not so far away from Royston where Ty Cobb spent his younger years. (Ever notice how most of the top ones come from the unsung hamlets—not from the big towns?)

Mize has a freshman challenger in Brooklyn's Pete Reiser, who in his first year on big time has been whacking away between .350 and .370 most of the season.

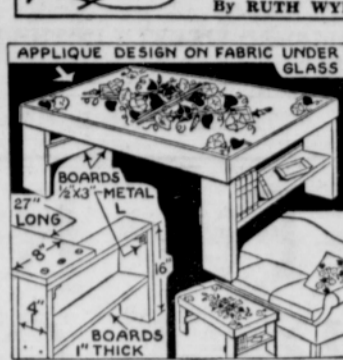
Pete Reiser is the ball player named by Leo Durocher as the "next Ty Cobb—provided there will ever be another Ty Cobb. Reiser is 185 pounds of speed, power, head and heart," according to Durocher's estimate.

Reiser is now just 21. Don't forget that when Tyrus Raymond was a Tiger debutante he batted .322. But from there on he finished with a lifetime average of .367 for 24 years—and that, my fellow countrymen, is something to shoot at.

But for all that, the stretch duels between Williams and DiMaggio, Mize and Reiser, will add considerably to the general public interest in both races. Suppose someone else beats them out? What of it? They are still the four best hitters in the two big leagues over a period of time.

## NEW IDEAS for Home-makers

By RUTH WYETH SPEARS



screwed together with 1-inch metal angles. A shelf was then nailed in and a 1/2 by 3-inch board nailed across the back of it. Two boards for the top of the table were then screwed to the end sections.

Now the needle-lady comes in. The table was to be painted putty color and then waxed. She bought a yard of slightly darker tan saten and applied a design of bright blue and red morning glories and green leaves on it with stems and tendrils in green outline stitch. This was placed over the table top and tacked around the edge. A piece of window glass was then cut to fit and 1/2 by 3-inch pieces were screwed to the sides.

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