

There's Always Another Year

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CHAPTER XIV—Continued

"I think I understand, child," she had said, in a voice that was all sadness. And it was Silver who had cried.

By midafternoon the sky was a sullen, gray-white glare of heat, and the leaves of the Micheners' shade trees drooped like flakes of lead. A new and sinister stillness pervaded the air, a sort of hushed and unwholesome waiting. Although there was not a cloud in sight, low in the west there was a curious humid depth of blue, as though the paint from a water-color had run down and settled.

"It's going to storm!" Grandma Michener predicted.

Silver was preparing to leave for home when Phil Michener came back from Maynard. The incident at the Emerald Bay club had been the talk of the town during the day.

"Strikes me," Phil added, "Roddy ought to keep that pretty wife of his away from such places—though that's his business, not mine."

"Corinne wasn't over there last night?" Silver put in.

"She was there with the Richters," Phil told her.

Silver bade a hurried farewell and started for home. As she spurred Rusty over the short-cut and through the fields, she found herself shivering with some nameless apprehensiveness that had no connection with the approaching storm. Here and there alongside the grassy, almost unused road, the cottonwood leaves rustled fitfully, as if in some secret agitation, for it could not be the glazed, dead air that stirred them.

The light was subtly changing. The effect of it was rather that of looking at an eclipse of the sun through a blue glass. And when Silver finally turned her horse into his own pasture, the western horizon had swollen into a blue-black, monstrous reef.

There was no one in the yard as she approached Roddy's house. Roddy and Steve, Silver knew, were cutting hay in the south field, almost a mile away. The whirr of the mower came faintly on the dead stillness of the later afternoon.

In the driveway, before the door of the big house, stood Roddy's car. As Silver passed it, she glanced into it and saw a large black suitcase lying across the seat. Could Corinne possibly be planning to go somewhere with the storm coming on?

She flung open the kitchen door and almost collided with Corinne—hatted and gloved, and wearing a tailored dark silk dress suitable for traveling. In one hand she carried a small leather case and her purse. Under her other arm she carried a large black suitcase. These details Silver took in with alarmed comprehension.

"Where in the world are you going, Corinne?" she asked. "Don't you see there's a storm coming up?"

Corinne laughed nonchalantly, although her eyes flamed in reckless defiance. "I haven't time to tell you," she replied. "I have to hurry. . . . What are you doing? Let me go!"

Her voice rose to a piercing shriek as Silver seized her and forced her violently into a chair.

"For God's sake, Corinne!" Silver panted. "Have you lost your senses completely?"

"Take your hands off me!" Corinne burst out. She had gone white with fury as she struggled to release herself.

Silver dropped Corinne's arms and stepped back from her, aghast and bewildered. "Are you going away with Gerald Lucas?" she demanded.

"This is none of your business!" Corinne fumed as she sprang from the chair. "I know what I'm doing. I haven't time to talk to you—even if I wanted to!"

She started again toward the door, but Silver barred her way.

"How dare you interfere with me?" Corinne stammered, with something of her old imperious manner, which was to Silver merely pathetic now. "You must be crazy—"

"It's you who are crazy," Silver interrupted coldly.

Corinne seemed to regain control of herself. "Think what you like," she said in a calmer tone. "I have never cared much about what you think of me, anyhow." She pushed back her sleeve with a trembling hand and

glanced at her watch. "All I want now is to get away. That's all I've wanted from the first day I came here. I've left a note telling Roddy he can find the car in front of Haber's store. Let me pass, please!"

Silver did not move from her place before the door. "I can't let you go—like this."

"Have your own way, then," Corinne told her. "I'll go out by the front door."

Silver burst suddenly into tears and clung to Corinne.

"Corrie—I implore you! Don't do this to yourself! I know what life with Gerald will be. I've seen enough of it—I've been through it. Your life will be ruined. Corinne, darling—please—please—I won't let you go!"

Silver caught her arm, but Corinne, with a sharp little jerk of her body, disengaged herself. Her small, pliant face was frozen with determination. She looked suddenly years older.

"I tell you—I don't care!" she cried desperately. Her head was proud and high. "I can't let him go away alone. I realized that last night when he told me he would have to leave. I love him—and he loves me." For an appalling moment her face became almost shrewish. "If I don't like the way Gerald lives, perhaps I can make something worth while out of him—and I couldn't do that for Roddy Willard!"

Before Silver could reach her, Corinne had darted into the front room and out the door. Silver ran after her, sobbing, pleading, clutching at her in despair, but Corinne, in stony, inexorable silence, climbed into the car and drove away.

Silver looked wildly after her, and stood for a moment with her hand pressed frantically against her mouth. She was vaguely aware that it had grown much darker, that the earth seemed enclosed in an airless, suffocating sphere. Then she stamped her foot and brushed the tears impatiently from her eyes.

"Go, then—you d-d little idiot!" she said aloud as she saw the car pass through the gateway and gather speed in the open road.

Suddenly there came into her mind the clamorous necessity of finding Roddy. The distance to the hayfield seemed immeasurable as she went running, stumbling, plunging to no avail again and again over the entangling meshes of grass, over the familiar and the treacherous ruins of a fallow field which was wavering strangely now with livid patches of shadow. She paused and glanced over her shoulder to reassure herself that she had come at least half way, when there came a sound that was a shrill, demoniacal whine, followed by a roar that stunned all thought.

Then the rain came.

The rain, the rain, the blessed rain! Silver threw her arms wide and laughed in sheer pagan joy as the rich, drowning flood of it descended upon her. It washed away all drouth and hunger and defeat; it washed all error from the human heart and wrong thinking from the human mind.

The rain ceased as suddenly as it had begun. Presently, from the direction of the Willard hill, Silver saw a dark shape plunging toward her. It was Roddy.

"What the devil are you doing out here?" he demanded as he came within speaking distance.

"I started out to find you—when the rain came," she replied haltingly.

"We hit for the house when we saw it coming," he said.

"You've been home—you've found Corinne's letter?" she asked.

"I found it," he replied in a clipped tone.

"I tried to stop her, Roddy. I fought with her—but I couldn't do anything. Then I ran—to get you—so that you could go after her—before it was too late."

Roddy smiled bitterly. "H—I, they've gone to Mexico!" he said. "That's too far away for me."

"You're going to let her go?"

"It isn't as bad as it looks, kid," he said slowly. "Corinne really left me—months ago. But—come along. Steve is out looking for you, and Phronie is having fits because you're not in the house."

He put his arm about her gently and they walked in silence toward the house. To the eastward, lightning strode across the sky, and all about them are air quaked with thunder.

"Don't you think too much about this, Silver," Roddy said steadily as they went across the field. "I'm giving Corinne a chance to live the life she wants to live. I've known what she wanted—but I've never been able to give it to her. I was a d-d fool, I guess. But there's something I want to tell you—Corinne is really in love with Lucas. I have suspected it all along, but when she came home last night—there was something about her—a sort of glory in her face that I've never seen there before. I asked her about Lucas and she told me she loved him. There wasn't anything I could do about it, kid. I told her she could go when she felt like it."

Silver's heart beat so rapidly that she could make no reply. They made their way across the field until they came parallel with Roddy's experimental tract of corn. The sky was lifting now as though the lid were being raised from a casket of glowing jewels. Green and gold and blue, in a cleansed and hallowed world—it cast over the heart a spell of awe and wonder.

On this, the south side of the field, the locusts had done very little damage. And now, after the rain, the stalks stood tall and fine, the snug, firm ears glistened, and the leaves flowed with beauty.

Silver, her eyes upon the field, thought of Corinne. "How could she go away from this, Roddy—and take a chance on the life—"

Roddy smiled down at her. "Life's a gamble—wherever you live it, Silver," he said. "It's when you live it with someone you love that makes the difference."

He took her shoulders in his hands, turned her about and looked through almost a year of frustration, despair and defeat—into the serenity of Silver's eyes.

And across his shoulder, Silver saw a rainbow above the land.

[THE END.]

Meaning of Word "Hex"

The noun hex, the plural of which is hexes, is used of an individual, whether male or female, who practices witchcraft. The word is derived from the German hexe, meaning witch, wizard. The verb hex means to practice witchcraft (upon); to bewitch. Both noun and verb are localisms peculiar to the people of the United States, particularly in the Pennsylvania German districts.—Literary Digest.

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OREGON STATE NEWS OF GENERAL INTEREST

Brief Resume of Happenings of the Week Collected for Our Readers

Eugene — The Eugene postoffice will add two clerks, two carriers, and one stenographer to its staff by December 1, due to the 40-hour week ruling and because of increased business.

Forest Grove — The total valuation of Washington county property, including corporations and utilities, amounts to \$24,534,926. This is a drop of \$72,026 as compared with last year.

LaGrande — H. M. Howard of LaGrande is the winner of the Union county deer pool of \$14.25. He killed a buck weighing 278 pounds. Fifty-seven hunters were in the pool and 27 bucks were weighed in.

Molalla — A \$20,646 flood-control project on the Molalla river has been approved by the Clackamas county court and the Portland office of the WPA and forwarded to Washington for final approval.

Springfield — More than 40 of the 200 signatures on the recall petitions for city officials of Springfield, filed in the county clerk's office late Wednesday afternoon, were declared void, with the check incomplete.

McMinnville — Because it is felt that soil conditions and early spring rains would prevent the success of the venture, plans for the construction of a flax-retting and scutching plant at McMinnville have been abandoned.

Hood River — Hope of the salvage of apples that were on the trees during the cold spell has been abandoned at Hood River. When the frost went out the fruit was left a mass of pulp. Late estimates are that the loss will be about 20,000 boxes.

Newberg — W. J. Knowles, Silas Wallace and Harold Fairbrother of Newberg, who started East in an old Maxwell touring car, found the going too tough when the side curtains were blown off their car. At Cheyenne they left the car and took passage in a modern bus.

Ashland — The Bagley Canning company packed 1,431,602 cans of tomatoes this season, the largest single pack in the Pacific northwest, according to Manager R. E. Koozer. The tomatoes brought approximately \$20,520.70 to growers and were produced on about 215 acres. Payroll at the cannery was about \$15,000 for the 48-day season.

Delake — While a near-gale roared off the coast, thousands of salmon fought vainly to enter the mouth of the channel leading to Devils lake which has been blocked by sand. About three weeks ago, just as the annual run was due to start, a freak tide laid a four-foot sand bar across the channel which has thus far withstood all efforts to wash it away. Last week citizens of this sector tried to clear a way through the bar.

Chum Begin Coming In
Rockaway — The chum run has started. These fish gather outside the bar and will not come into the bays till the rains begin. Due to the higher prices offered more fishermen are in this trade.

Crossings Work Approved
Salem — The state utility commissioner approved applications of the state highway department for the elimination of 11 railroad crossings in different sections of the state. The work will be paid for out of Oregon's allocation of federal highway aid funds aggregating \$3,200,000.

The Dalles Lays Plans for Wharf
The Dalles — Plans were being made for water terminals at The Dalles to serve ocean-going traffic upon completion of the Bonneville dam. The specifications include the wharf, 125 by 110 feet, two timber and corrugated iron warehouses, and a set of 40-ton motor truck scales.

Cougars Become Nuisance
Rockaway — Cougars are becoming a menace to Tillamook county deer and livestock. The cats have been killing sheep on the lower Kelchis river and especially trained dogs have been sent into the vicinity. Wednesday a male cougar and two cubs were killed, but a female, which the dogs had treed, escaped. A short time ago Joe Williams of Beaver killed a male and a female, both large cats, treed by his dogs, which made three cougars killed in that district in the past month. Both animals' stomachs were full of deer meat.

Eavesdropping on the "Monticello Party Line"

"The Monticello Party Line" is a radio program recently begun on a series of middle-western and southern radio stations. The radio listener is asked to imagine that he is eavesdropping on the party line of Monticello—and in this way he daily hears all the activity, the gossip, the fun, and the occasional trouble, that marks life in Monticello.

All the people in this program are thoroughly natural, everyday folks. The setting is that of a real town—Monticello, Illinois—the home-town of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, the product that sponsors this new and different radio show. "The Monticello Party Line" is broadcast every week-day except Saturday.—Adv.

Happiness Recipe

Find out what a man likes most to eat and give it to him at least three times a week—even if it be salt mackerel.

A Law Every Mother Should Know and Observe

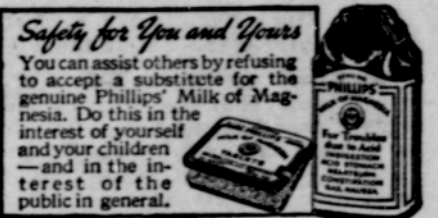
Never Give Your Child An Unknown Remedy without Asking Your Doctor First



According to any doctor you ask, the only safe way is never to give your child a remedy you don't know all about, without asking him first.

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Rid Yourself of Kidney Poisons

DO you suffer burning, scanty or too frequent urination; backache, headache, dizziness, loss of energy, leg pains, swellings and puffiness under the eyes? Are you tired, nervous—feel all unstrung and don't know what is wrong?

Then give some thought to your kidneys. Be sure they function properly for functional kidney disorder permits excess waste to stay in the blood, and to poison and upset the whole system.

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