

Thrilling Tales of Love and Adventure

One Tooth Less

By Elsie Endicott



HE WAS a comical fellow and the first time we saw him was when he inserted his features, accompanied by a two-bit smile, into our department one day recently and arrested our attention by turning loose a medley of sounds which very much resembled what a French menu looks like, only a trifle thicker.

Sometime later we discovered that he was a Bulgarian, dubbed Heinz by the hospital attendants, because no one could understand his line of talk enough to get his real name and because he occupied Room 57.

The fact that Heinz left the scenes of his nativity when the grape shot became too habitual for comfort, made one think that he was not without some amount of gray matter in his anatomy, but when on the second day after his arrival in the land of the free and home of polite graft, he paused in the middle of a busy street to contemplate the lofty structures and allowed his person to become entangled in the cog-wheels of progress, it looked as if his judgment wasn't so keen after all and that he would probably have done as well by staying at home and being shot up by the enemy.

After the curious visitor was carefully picked out of the mechanism of two automobiles and a truck, the

pieces were brought to our hospital and a bunch of squab doctors who needed practice were detailed on the case. And strange as it may seem, the amateur medical, with the kindly assistance of a few internes, succeeded in putting Heinz's works together so well that nearly everything matched up and there were but two or three minor fragments left over.

When Heinz had become able, the doctors had let him out for a few hours each day to take a little exercise through the corridors, and thus it was that he wandered away from the regular halls and into our department. We did not know all this until later, however, for as our department, that of dentistry, is located in a wing removed from the general hospital, we see very little of the patients except those brought to us for treatment.

"Gee, what is it?" whispered Richards, my co-worker, when Heinz pushed his revamped anatomy into our midst and got off the aforementioned bit of scrambled talk.

"If you guess right you can have it," I replied lightly and went on polishing my favorite yell producer.

"Did you want some work done?" asked Richards, in that honey and mush tone he employs while strapping his victim in the chair and telling him it will not hurt one bit.

Heinz merely let out a couple more lengths of smile and nodded yes and no.

asked Richards, trying to stab me with a look.

"That's right," I admitted. "Why don't you draw him a picture of it, then?"

"A picture of what?"

"I don't know."

"Aw, shut up," said my ungrateful friend and turned to the patient.

"Spreken ze Dutch," he told him, and got a shake of the head and some more Chesy-cat grin.

"Polly voo the gay Paree," said Richards, after thinking a while, and this got him a stare of polite spasm followed by another all-encompassing grin.

"Hi yab, sub gub yakamee no checke no washee," I put in playfully and received as much encouragement as Richards.

"It gets me," muttered my fellow worker as he surveyed the expansive smile in bewilderment. "He must be something or other. He looks like a bear."

"No, he isn't a bear," I stated positively. "I had seen several bears. He looks something like John."

"That's the first sensible idea I ever heard you express," congratulated Richards. "Send for John, while I watch it."

"Sure, sure," I replied without knowing what he meant. "That was a fine idea; great head." And I pushed the Turkish janitor's call button.

After a few minutes John, the Turk, appeared and I then discovered what my great idea was.

John looked the other over carefully for a moment and then let loose a collection of sounds which were so much like our victim's warble that I knew at once the two must be near relatives.

When John got it all out, however, and Heinz put on that wide smile and began to shake his head I began to feel discouraged and wanted to go home.

Richards looked grieved, too, and John seemed disappointed, but recovered almost at once and a peculiar look came to his face; a look that made a juvenile shiver scot up my spinal column without any reason whatever.

The Turkish janitor's eyes narrowed, he leaned toward the other and spoke a few words which sounded like a saw striking a knot.

Immediately Heinz's smile reappeared, but accompanied this time by a vigorous nodding of the head, and the next moment we were pulling John off the patient and trying to find out what in hades had happened.

"Him-Bulgarian," yelled the Turk, after he had ceased to struggle. "My brother—him get kill las' week! Bulgarians kill him—I kill Bulgarian!"

"Things were looking brighter every moment now and the prospect for a

first-class murder never seemed better, but after we had sat on the vengeful Turk a while, talked to him as a couple fathers, shook some light of understanding into his head, showed him why it was neither advisable nor polite to indulge in miscellaneous murder at this time and gave him two perfectly good dollars, he consented to postpone the killing until some future date and we let him up.

"Now, John," coaxed Richards. "We've got to find out what he wants and you are our only hope. Please, John ask him just this one little question, and after we get through with him you can kill him all you like."

John was stubborn but finally persuaded, and shot a sizzling query at the patient. Immediately came the answer and even yet that vast stretch of grin lingered. Nothing could wipe that out.

"What does he say?" we asked eagerly.

The janitor stood a moment puzzled. Then he glanced over the room and a look of genuine mirth showed through the generous coat of engine grease and coal dust on his face.

"No understand him," he said, and we knew he lied, but the next moment he was gone.

"Well, I'll be damned!" said Richards and sat down suddenly.

"On two," I replied, and mopped my brow.

And then, like a bright light shining through the darkness, Heinz arose,

crossed over to the dental chair, seated himself, pointed to the tools lying about and rubbed the side of his face.

"Aw, why didn't we think of it before," growled my partner. "Of course, he has something the matter with his teeth or he wouldn't come here. All we need do is examine his grinders, find what is wrong and fix it. A good dentist doesn't have to be told what the trouble is. Gee, we are a couple of nuts."

So Richards set out to discover something. All doubt had now vanished from his mind; he was master of the situation; again down to his calm, collected self and operating at his profession.

In a very business-like manner he pried the victim's jaws apart and looked in.

"Dirty," he muttered. "I'll clean them up first so I can see what they look like."

It was a skillful operation and quickly performed. When finished Heinz looked in the mirror, grinned at himself and noted that his features had been improved. Then he grinned at Richards and nodded his head to show that all was going well, but on second thought looked serious, almost astonished, and again rubbed his face.

"Uh-huh, toothache," said Richards, nodded his head at the patient and rubbed his own face in reply.

"Pretty soft," he said to himself, "pretty soft," and began sorting over his tools of torture, while I sneaked

around and proceeded to get the grip of Heinz's system.

There are few teeth in the present time which do not have at least one tooth which is extracted or fixed, if you take that's word for it, and when discovered that one of the

lars contained a small hole, we decided at once that the source of trouble and pain was hidden in the hole.

When I say there is a hole, I mean a hole in the tooth, not in the patient's head. But we got the hole, and I realize that the hole, when seen abruptly, he speak the truth and some facts.

Before closing, however, mention that Heinz went the door like an electric plug never seen thereafter, and light came upon the Turkish janitor in to see us the next

"Been thinking," he said, "are you think, are you stop here and see my lookin' glass, see his think it is barber shop shave, Jus' figure him out."

Then with a sad smile he ed and left us to our own certainly had not shown he had jerked out one of his

Wanted===A Home Maker

By Joe Busche



YOU haven't anything to contribute to our rummage sale? I thought that perhaps you might give something, and take a table. You know you haven't been to any of the church doings since—"

Jane's voice trailed into an embarrassed silence under the level gaze of Alida Barnes. She jerked her shawl around her shoulders nervously, but lingered in the open door as the other woman uttered a calm:

"No—I can't think of anything now, Jane, but I—I'll lend a table—and if I come across anything I'll bring it when I come to the sale."

She resumed her pie-making with a cool ignoring of her caller's farrying that provoked Jane into a snappish:

"Well, don't fail to come—for I expect Henry and his wife will be there. Of course, you knew he was married?"

Alida Barnes critically eyed the pie balanced on her upturned palm; then painstakingly trimmed off the superfluous crust before sending an apparently careless: "Oh, yes—I knew it some time ago!" over her shoulder.

Jane sniffed unbelievably, then went out, leaving behind her a woman outwardly calm, but inwardly raging. She understood perfectly Jane's object in coming and resented it with all the force of her proud nature.

"Humph!" she muttered. "Little she cared about my coming to that sale! She just wanted to see how I'd take Henry's marriage! But she didn't get much satisfaction out of it, I guess! I hadn't heard he was married—but I'd have died before I'd have told her so! Nobody shall say that I'm breaking my heart over him—even if I did have my wedding dress all made, ready to marry him five years ago! The man doesn't live who can boast that he's marrying me just for a housekeeper! Why, I'd have sent him packing, even if the ceremony had been half through

before I found it out. And I shouldn't have known if Jane hadn't heard him say it; but, all the same, I've despised her ever since she told me, and I can't help it!"

As she set her pie aside, a sudden impulse sent her hurrying up into the attic. Pulling a trunk out from under the eaves, she dusted and unlocked it, taking out a package carefully wrapped in blue tissue paper, she opened it and shook out a white satin gown, its bodice veiled in yellowed, filmy lace. Stroking the shimmering folds across her lap her lips trembled pitifully—then settled into a defiant line.

She wouldn't cry—she just wouldn't! But despite her determination, a moment later, the dress was tossed aside, her head went down on the edge of the open trunk, and heavy sobs racked her from head to foot. She had loved her fiancé with the passionate adoration of a young girl; and the shattering of her love dream had been a bitter blow.

But presently the storm passed. She folded the dress again in its blue tissue wrappings and took it downstairs.

"I'll contribute it to the rummage sale—and sell it to Henry's wife!" she declared grimly, locking it away in the front room closet.

It was the night of the sale. The church vestry was crowded, and sales were brisk. Alida was busy keeping her customers in a "buying mood" by her witty though good-natured comments on her wares. She had nearly succeeded in convincing a deacon that it was his duty to purchase an antiquated bonnet "to help the cause"—when her badinage died on her lips, and her face whitened under her smiles.

Henry was coming toward her table, a handsome, smartly gowned woman on his arm! Alida looked in every detail of her face and form in one swift, surreptitious glance. She also took in the fact that she was years older than the man by her side.

"A money match!" she thought,

scornfully, mentally bracing herself for the trying ordeal of greeting her old lover under the curious eyes watching her; and so, like a wise general, she took the initiative; and as the couple drew near, she called out a friendly:

"Welcome back to Woodville! You'll find many of your old friends here to night, and I hope that you and your—"

She paused purposely, and Henry murmured a polite, if somewhat shaky:

"Mrs. er, I want you to meet an old friend of mine—Miss Alida Barnes."

Alida put out a slim hand to meet the warm grasp of the older woman, who, after expressing her pleasure at meeting an old friend of "Henry's" began looking over the articles on sale. She finally turned to her companion, who stood leaning against the table, his eyes frankly fastened on the face of the saleswoman on the other side of it.

"I can't seem to find anything I could use, Henry," she said apologetically.

He turned, smiling at her puzzled face.

"Oh, buy anything," he advised, "people buy at a rummage sale just for the sake of buying, to help the cause, whatever it may be."

The psychological moment had come!

Alida turned like a flash. From a box behind the table, she drew forth a wonderful, shimmering mass of satin and lace; shook out the lustrous folds and murmured sweetly:

"Possibly your—your wife might like this, as—as a souvenir. You'll see it is somewhat old-fashioned. It was intended for a wedding gown; but the bride-to-be found out that her promised husband was not—was not—"

She heard her voice deserting her, and stooped to pick up a fallen pin cushion.

The other woman uttered an exclamation of delight.

"Why, it's beautiful—beautiful!" she cried. "Of course I'll buy it! It

will work in splendidly to leaux next winter, Henry."

At the sight of the face went white. He drew back, looking at Alida, he drew back, and she saw him

miss away from his eyes a decided:

"No, Aunt Gertrude—claim this! And Miss Barnes—you are evidently not a mistake. This lady is my Uncle Henry, he's named. Through no fault significantly, I'm still a child with a wedding gown in stion, I shall not tell you to wear it. Please take it keep it till tomorrow when Henry joins us then, and if you ask my advice in the you see, I want a house than a housekeeper! Well, Alida, enlighten me! No different in manner, version of the same remark ago, uttered a low but

"I shall be very glad to

A Mother Love

By Clarence Carden.



JOHN stared at the note on the table until its every word was burned into his brain. It said:

"I am going to David. You would not give me the money to go with, so I have sold the spoons—they were mine, you know—and the old hall clock. You will find your dinner on the stove and I've engaged Mary Ball to do your washing on Mondays. You are a good hand to cook, so I guess you can get along somehow. If you should need any medicine, there's the peppermint in the kitchen cupboard, on the left hand corner of the third shelf from the top, and the catnip and other herbs are hanging in the northeast corner of the garret. Shall stay as long as David needs me."

"AMELIA," On the table beside Amelia's note

was a letter addressed to her from a doctor in the far West, which told of the serious illness of David.

John's eyes gleamed with anger as he realized that his quiet Amelia, who had always asked his advice, and had never taken it upon herself to act without it had really gone. Why hadn't she shown the letter to him at once?

True, she had asked him for money to go and see David, but he had not given it to her. Hadn't David disgraced him? Brought his honored name down to the dust? David, their only son and child upon whom they had built such high hopes.

"Poor David," he said, "if I had known you were so sick, but—"

The "poor David" was said not without sorrow, but he was getting used to the boy's absence, although he had missed him at first. But should he get used to getting along without his wife, if only for a time? John was one of those men whose husband love was stronger than his father love.

The very independence of Amelia! She had sold the spoons that were a wedding present from her aunt, and had cost \$25 or more a dozen! And the old hall clock! Why, he—although it was a maternal heirloom on his wife's side—had refused \$200 for it.

While he went to the hall to see if the clock was really gone, Amelia was being carried miles away from him by the fast moving train. After a two days' journey, which seemed a year, she reached her son's bedside. He clasped his wasted arms around her neck, and his sunken eyes drinking in her every look, as he cried joyfully, "O, ma! My darling mother, you've come!"

"Yes, child. Yes, yes, my boy, mother's come!"

A few days after David said, "I wish pa was here, too. But fathers are different. It's mothers that stick to a feller through thick and thin. O, ma! I can't realize that it's five years since I saw you. I've tried hard, ma, out

here to do right. I have, honest. Haven't drank a drop since I left home. I've had my lesson. But everything seemed against me, and just when I was getting a little start, I had pneumonia, and all my savings had to go for the hospital bill. And now—"

"Never mind, child, don't worry; mother will stay with you and care for you."

"I know, but it won't be long. It is September, ain't it? Haan! Dr. Brown told you? It don't seem square, that just as a feller has learned how to live, he's got to die."

"Hush, child, mother will stay with you."

A legacy from her aunt came to Amelia a short time after her arrival in the West, and her husband's prediction that she would never be sent for to him for money did not come true. That legacy had a strange effect upon her.

David lingered until April, when he

died. His mother's eyes were light but fearless. He moved to an intense nature that had moved too long in narrow limits.

John met his wife at the station. He had a crepe band around his hat, and kissed her with gravity. "I've made all arrangements for the funeral, Amelia, we'll have the best of everything. I've engaged some fine singers."

"John, he won't know now. The time was when our boy went wrong, to have stuck to him."

"But he disgraced my name."

"He never was a bad boy," apologized the mother, "but easily led. He never would have got into that brawl if he hadn't been drinking. We are both to blame for his bringing up. We laughed and thought how cute he was, when we should have checked him, and he grew up thinking how smart he was. When he came home that night you told him you wouldn't help him, he'd disgraced you. Threw away

your boy because he didn't turn out perfect, when 'twas your own fault!"

John tried to speak, but no words came. She went on: "When I used to try to correct him or punish him, you'd speak right up, and David knew. So, I weak thing that I was, let you have your way, as in everything, and we lost our boy; and you, when you might have saved him, let him go, for he had disgraced your name. You were a disgrace to him, I'm thinking."

It was small consolation to Amelia that the whole town turned out to David's funeral. She thought the time to do for our own is while they are alive, and not wait until they are dead.

Afterwards, their life was a strange one, although to outsiders it was much the same as before. John visited the cemetery often. Folks said that he took his boy's death harder than his wife did. But that grave held the tragedy of their lives.

Amelia was not the same. One day

when her husband came to the clock, she said with a smile: "Don't you ever mention the spoons again. I got to my dying boy."

"I know it, Amelia! I mention them again. I've everything over—don't you ain't—and see just how you would do if I could live again. What loneliness will be without David, who went on with a catch in his voice, less we adopt Jim Laverne's child. You know his name, and Jim passed away, and body seems to want the little little feller, six years old, helping us we will need Amelia, what do you say?"

All the pent-up emotion being found expression when she said:

"Take him, John, take him!"

Happiness Regained

By Elsie Endicott



JOHN LANG ought to have been a happy man. He had suddenly come into fame as a popular novelist; his writing had brought him an easy competence; his talents had won for him a cordial reception into the most exclusive clubs, and the literary world welcomed him with open arms. But he was anything but happy.

Of course, there was a girl at the bottom of it all. There usually is. He had not seen her since she was a slip of a maid, with a turned-up nose which no amount of coaxing and nurture could keep the freckles off, and very red hair that curled and tossed provokingly. Everybody made fun of her freckles and hair; that is, everybody

but John, who would chase the culprits, who called her "Ginger" or "Firebrand," until he caught them and they promised amendment. They were good puns—John and Peggy—that is, they were until the clash came. John had casually mentioned one day that Peggy would make a sweet little wife. He said he knew she could darn and mend and cook and clean better than any other girl in the village. The other girls were so silly. When he got married, he told her, he wanted a girl who would be the queen of his home and who would know that she belonged in the home and not go "gallivanting" off like a certain young bride they both knew.

"Huh!" Peggy had retorted hotly, "I guess you think queen of the home means 'drudge of the kitchen.' Not for mine!" Then had followed a hot and heavy war of words, John maintaining

his part of the argument with vengeance, Peggy with fire and anger, and ending up with the stinging and blinding information, "And you've gone and went and done yourself too much honor, mister, to think I'd be your kitchen drudge, for I'll be nobody's galle slave. I'm going on the stage to be a famous prima donna—so there!" And John, cut to the quick, had run away from home and had not seen her since.

But tonight as he paced his studio, with the cheerful glow from the open fire casting wistful shadows, he lived the scene all over again. He wondered how little Peggy was. He knew she had left the little town after the death of the aunt with whom she had lived. He wondered whether she had kept to her old determination to go on the stage; and he shuddered. For all her temper and girlish arrogance,

Peggy was a trusting little soul, and there were wolves about! He sank into a chair by the open fire and buried his face in his hands. Just for a sight of her again—now that success had come she wouldn't have to be a kitchen drudge, and he was broader now and more considerate of woman's place in the world. And, oh! for a sound of that glorious voice!

Suddenly he sat up. From a studio next door a plaintive little song, accompanied by a master hand on the piano, came clearly to his ears. It thrilled, throbbed and called; there was a pause which signified waiting, then it called again stronger, longing, and pleadingly.

John Lang above everything else was honorable and would have scorned an eavesdropper, yet he deliberately moved aside the heavy bookcase which barricaded the door between his

and the music teacher's studio, and peeped in through the keyhole. Now, the radius discernible through a keyhole is not particularly spacious, and yet it is surprising what emotions the vision there visible can sometimes produce.

The girl stood beside the piano and John Lang saw a golden head, topped by a rather unfashionable hat, a girlish bosom, heaving under a shabby dress with the emotion of her song, and white hands clasped convulsively together. Was it possible Peggy had been studying in the very next room to his without his knowledge, he wondered. This was the only night of the week that he made a practice of giving up work absolutely, and that was probably the night Peggy was taking her lesson.

It seemed an eternity before it was over, with its exasperating scales and

mechanical exercises, but Lang was waiting at the elevator the minute the girl emerged. He was shocked at her frail appearance. The high color of other years had given away to a clear white—lovely in its transparency, but pathetic in its indication of her delicacy—while in place of the plump, rounded figure appeared that of the stymph.

As Peggy recognized him, she drew in her breath, and though her eyes lighted, she spoke no word. Neither did he, but hungry eyes melted into each other, and outstretched hands that were empty with longing clasped warmly.

Lang brought her into his study. "How has the world been to you?" he ventured, drawing up a chair.

"Oh, wretched! I'm a stenographer—not a particularly good one, for I loathe it, but it's the only thing I can

do to earn enough to support myself. Your voice is simply beautiful. I listened while you still love to sing?"

"I adore it!" with a look for nicety of expression.

"I'll want to be a pianist—'M, I—I guess so."

And Peggy, being a very ing, how could she help giggling after the first few braces were over. "Oh, you give that cantabile to mine a digested 'sooty' And goodness, won't I love in that glorious kitchen