

Thrilling Tales of Love and Adventure

Love At First Sight

By Enos Emory

OW, Aunt Rose, I'm going away—to be gone six weeks at least." Bettie stood before her astonished relative arrayed for a journey.

Mrs. Lane gasped. "But, Bettie, what of Mr. Deane? You know he is to be married."

"I can entertain him, auntie. And, really, you may marry him in the fall. I'm declaring right now that I have none of these cut-and-dried ideas, where everything is decided before a girl is even born. I've done the matter over for a long time, and I'm determined to marry rather than carry out a long engagement and marry a man I've never seen. It's more than probable he will love some girl to love and will be turning him down."

opened her pocketbook and counted its contents.

"Where are you going, Bettie?" asked Mrs. Lane.

"I'm going to try for a position as governess to a lady at Wood End. You see, auntie, in throwing up my marriage with Deane, I'm also throwing up all my prospects for future wealth and must go to work."

"Wood End!" said Mrs. Lane, startled.

"Yes," said Bettie, carelessly; "a lady with two children. I'm fond of kiddies, and while governessing is something I don't know much about, I'm determined to try it. You see, auntie, the wealth I refuse to marry I must make by labor."

"Why not remain at home until you at least meet your fiancé? I've heard that he is a very personable creature; good looking and well educated."

Bettie counted her money over again to make sure. "Thirty dollars," she said, thrusting it back in her purse. "It's rather far to Wood End, but thirty dollars will take me there and fetch me back in case I prove unsuitable. Goodbye, Aunt Rose. Be good to Mr. Deane, and here's luck to both of you."

Mrs. Lane watched the girl's retreating figure until it disappeared. "To think of Bettie going out governessing and to Wood End of all places. It's fate."

Bettie settled herself comfortably in her seat and amused herself for a

while, watching the different people who at intervals got on and off the train. She was attracted by some children in the seat across the way from her, whose chatter was amusing. She would not arrive at her destination until late in the afternoon and her thoughts reverted to the probable effect her absence would have upon Mr. Deane when he should make his appearance the ensuing day. She closed her eyes and smiled, only to open them widely and spring to her feet. She felt a sudden, terrible shock. There was the hiss of escaping steam, a roar of grinding wheels. The coach reared violently endwise and overturned, followed an instant later by the screams of the wounded passengers.

Bettie never knew how it was that she found herself standing on the ground at a safe distance from the broken coach. A streak of blood crimsoned her cheek, otherwise she was unhurt. A tall man in summer flannels grasped the two small children she had noticed in the coach and tossed them up beside her, saying, "Stay right here, you two kids, while I go find mamma," and back he plunged into the wreckage.

"Come on, young lady," he presently called to Bettie. "I guess you are the only woman able to walk. Everybody seems to need help."

Bettie sprang back to the coach. The lean, tall man looked his approval. "You are no coward," he said. "Now, here are two women terribly hurt. Can you hold this arm while I pry up the

timber that weighs her down?"

Side by side they labored. It seemed to Bettie that the lean, flannelled man was ubiquitous. Here and there he went, always where the need was greatest. And where he was there was she also. Bettie marvelled at his skill, his knowledge, his patience. It seemed to her as she worked beside him that she had known him forever. It was hard to realize that just a few hours previously she had not known that such a man existed. She was learning fast.

Other help soon came from a nearby station and he desisted from his labors long enough to speak a few words to the two children, who had remained where he had placed them.

Bettie smiled at the two mites standing with tightly closed fists near her.

"You got hurted," ventured the boy, pointing to the gash on her cheek.

"Uncle Bob won't let us get hurted. He's taking us home."

"Who are you?" asked Bettie idly.

"We're Puss and Robbie Burns," said the little girl. "We live at Wood End."

Bettie thought quickly. These must be the youngsters she was going to teach. What a strange meeting! Badly injured, their mother lay unconsciously among the wounded. Bettie sighed deeply.

"Why that sight?" queried the man in flannels. "We have both done what we could here."

"I am so selfish," she returned light-

ly. "I was just lamenting my own bad luck. I think I'll not finish my journey, but return home. Somehow, this seems like the end of all my dreams."

He was looking at her attentively. "Where is your home, if I may ask?"

"I live in Winfield—a small town. I started out this morning to seek my fortune as a governess."

He laughed. "Don't let one railway smash-up deter you from the fulfillment of your ambitions. Keep going."

"I had a sort of engagement at Wood End. But of course this disaster will make a change of program. I really believe those two little children are the ones I was to have in charge. The name was Burns."

The man was instantly interested. "My cousin's children," he said simply. "I have a business engagement at Winfield tomorrow, but fear it will have to be cancelled for the time being. Otherwise I would be glad to see you safely on your journey."

The news of the accident had been flashed along the line. Mrs. Lane heard the newboys crying their special and fear possessed her. She knew Bettie had taken that particular train. She had nearly worked herself up into an attack of nervous prostration, when the door opened and Bettie herself walked in.

"Auntie!"

"Oh, Bettie!"

"At home once more."

"No more to ramble," cried Aunt Rose.

"That's as may be," answered Bettie gravely.

"Auntie, I've met a man. I've met the man. He simply puts all other so-called men to shame. He's it. And he's coming here tomorrow."

"Upon my word," ejaculated Mrs. Lane. "And what about Mr. Deane?"

"I have turned him over to you. I cannot think of Mr. Deane when I am over my head in love with this man I am telling you of."

"Oh, Bettie. Is he handsome? Is he rich? Is he good?"

Bettie shook her head dubiously. "Not handsome. He's lean and tanned. I don't think he is rich, for his clothes are far too plain for that. No jewelry at all. But good! You should have seen him helping those stricken people. Yes, he is all to the good."

"Oh-o-o! What on earth will you live on?" wailed Aunt Rose, whose thoughts veered always toward the practical. "You'll starve."

"Not so long as the cook stays with you, Aunt Rose."

It was near dusk the following afternoon that Mrs. Lane waited expectantly in the parlor for Mr. Deane. Bettie had made a hasty flight, leaving her aunt to face the music and give the obnoxious suitor his come.

Father tired of his strange delay, Mrs. Lane casually watched a tall, slim figure striding toward the house. "Probably that is Bettie's man," thought she. "Why, I do believe he's coming here." And the bell rang

"It's Deane," she said a moment later as the door flew open and the girl brought in a card. "Where is Bettie? She shall manage her own scrapes."

And on the heels of the strange arrival Betty floated into the room.

"Mr. Deane," announced Mrs. Lane severely.

"Mr. Deane, my niece, Bettie Lane," Deane started forward, surprise and delight shining on his face.

Bettie, pale as a ghost, looked her confusion. "You?" she gasped. "You?"

"Yes, I was due yesterday, but was delayed and I see you did not receive the card I sent you," he exclaimed eagerly. "Oh, Bettie, I never dreamed you are the girl I fell in love with at first sight on the train."

"I'll leave you young people to quarrel your quarrels and calm your own storms," remarked Aunt Rose to nobody in particular. "I hope Bettie will come to her senses. She said if Mr. Deane were a little tin god on wheels she wouldn't marry him. And she came home from that railroad wreck head over heels in love with a long-legged man in flannel clothes whom she declared was 'it.'"

Aunt Rose reached the parlor door in time to save her life, and the cook outdid all former efforts on the supper. Every time Bettie raised her hand to her lips a great, bluish white stone sparkled so brightly on her finger that her auntie knew without being told that Bettie really had come to her senses.

A Farmer's Change Of Heart

By Annette Angert

HERE'S no use talking mother. We've just got to economize. That's all!"

Farmer Cobb's staid frame filled the narrow doorway of the hot kitchen where his ever patient wife had spent the long summer canning vegetables for the

birthday, and last night, when I passed the boys' door, I heard them say how tired they were of vegetables all the time and how they wished they had some steak and so—and so—"

The voice trailed off wearily and a little sobbing breath caused the tired woman to turn her head away from the angry man thus revealing her face to a bright young girl of 18, who came singing cheerily from the dining-room.

The song died instantly upon the girl's lips, as, dropping the armful of white clothes she was carrying, she sprang toward the little woman and pillowed the tired head upon her breast.

"You dear little motherkins!" she cried rebelliously. "It's a shame to have you work yourself to death!"

"Then why don't you help her instead of gallivanting over the country all the morning?"

The girl turned quickly toward her father. "And why was I gallivanting, as you call it? Trying to sell a few boxes of berries in order to get a few cents to buy something to wear. It's no use talking, father, we must have a little money. Just a little, father,

please, to get cheap little gowns for the church picnic."

"How much money have you? You ought to have a lot. You've been selling berries all summer."

"Yes, but who wants to buy them, when their own farms are overrun with them?" demanded the girl. "I only have \$2."

"Well, \$2 is \$2!" sagely remarked her father. "Put it in the bank, leave it there and you will always have money." After which brilliant remark, Farmer Cobb turned toward the door to intimate the culmination of the interview.

Gently forcing her mother into the broken kitchen rocker, which, incidentally, refused to rock, Fannie Cobb turned pleadingly to her father.

"Daddy, perhaps two dollars will get me a dress, but how about Mattie? She needs a new dress, too, and she's been kind of ailing this summer and couldn't sell any berries and so she has no money. Please, dad, give me a little for her. She will never ask for it herself."

"And a good thing she don't!" retorted the old man. "Cause she won't get it no more nor you will. I haven't

any money for tomfoolery."

The expression of the girl's face changed. The great eyes snapped angrily as she returned: "No! You haven't any money for us, but you spent \$5,000 this morning for another piece of land that you'll never use in a thousand years!"

"That's different!" muttered the old man. "I have to leave something for my sons."

"Gosh, dad," exclaimed one of them, who had approached unperceived and now poked his head through the kitchen window, screwing, of course! "Never mind the land. Give us a taste of meat once in a while by way of a change."

Then, as he noticed the droop of his mother's head, he wriggled his great frame through the window and clasped both arms around the quivering figure.

"I'm only joking, little mother. I don't care if I ever taste meat. There, there, dear!" as the poor little woman rested her head against his shoulder and wept pitiously.

With a snarl of rage, Farmer Cobb stamped out of the room.

"All the love for your mother," he grumbled. "There's no room for me in

your hearts."

"There will be," flashed back Fannie. "when you find room for us in your loose change pocket!"

"Hush, Fannie! You are bothering mother."

"All right, Bill. I'm mum. Dad means all right, but he just does not understand. I'm going to finish supper, mother dear. Bill, just put her in the hammock. Tie her in if necessary; anything as long as you keep her there."

And Fannie laughed merrily as Bill, suiting his actions to his sister's words, carried his now smiling mother from the stuffy kitchen to the apology of a hammock that adorned the front porch.

When the evening meal was placed upon the table, Farmer Cobb was still grouchy. "Where's Tom?" he demanded. "Suking, I'll be bound. Didn't want to hoe the potatoes this morning, but I kept him at it all day! I'll teach him who's boss!"

"Tom is not well, father!" There was a new note in Bill's voice that his father did not quite understand. "He has retired for the night!"

"No supper for Tom?" whispered

good natured Mattie, touching Fannie lightly with her foot.

"No, dear," answered Fannie. "Oh! And we have steak, too! Perhaps, if I told him—"

The sentence unfinished, the girl with a quivering apology, slipped from her chair and sped upstairs to her brother's room.

In a few minutes, accompanied by a scream, proclaimed the arrival of Tom and Mattie in a conglomerate heap at the foot of the stairs.

The magical words "broiled steak" had proven Tom's undoing. He tried to accompany Mattie. As he reached the head of the stairs, he was so dizzy, he could not reach the balustrade; just catching Mattie's outstretched hand as the loose sole of her worn shoe caught in the torn stair carpet, they arrived simultaneously in a heap at the foot of the stairs. Tom with both legs broken and Mattie with a broken arm.

After the departure of the doctors, Farmer Cobb, who had scarcely spoken since the accident, watched his wife and Fannie arranging the great front chamber, in which, two cots had been placed at opposite sides of the room.

"Fannie!" his voice sounded hoarse and

strained.

Fannie turned instantly and slipped an arm around the stooped shoulders. "They will be all right, dad. Perhaps, it won't be very expensive."

"Dad! The expense! They might have broken their precious necks! Hush, Fannie, what is Tom saying?"

"Thank you, just the same for the steak, little mother! It was bully of you to remember my birthday!"

A great gulping sob burst from Farmer Cobb's throat as he tottered to Tom's bed.

"Tom, boy, you can have all the steak you want from now on, and mother will have new things to work with, and the girls will have an allowance, and Bill—"

"Bill has his dear old dad!" replied his first-born, slipping his arm through that of his father. "One thing troubles me, father. How are mother and Fannie going to look after these invalids?"

"They are not going to look after them. The trained nurses are on the way and—"

"Poor patient Marandy!" he finished softly, as he felt his wife's hand slipped into his. "You have heard me speak for the last time of 'economy!'"

When John Forgot

By Will Seaton

HE Woman's Club met that afternoon with Mrs. Blaisdell, who had an old, stately house full of old, stately, graciously worn things. And Mrs. Blaisdell was like her house—of a past generation, yet all the pleasing on that account. She had straight, with pure hair and piercing black eyes. Black gown had no adornment save a plastron of thick yellow lace. In the midst of this lace a ruby darted

Some of these women were old, a few young, and most about her own age. She knew them all. She exchanged calls with them. Half a dozen were enthusiastic members of her whist and embroidery clubs, with three or four she was on intimate terms. She had believed there were no surprises in them for her. How could there be when she knew their houses, their clothes, their very personalities so well? And yet here in Mrs. Blaisdell's library, each woman presented a new aspect to her. She felt amazed, timid, almost awe struck. Of course she had known that Mrs. Armitage and Mrs. Reese and a lot more were university women, but she never had thought of their education amounting to more than the superficial boarding school training which she herself had received. As for Miss Shopland—could anything be more astonishing than the way she quoted Plato and Berger and Rauschenbusch? Mrs. Blaisdell believed that Plato was some kind of an ancient; of the other two she had never heard at all. Yet it seemed that not to know them was ig-

norance of the most culpable kind. Why, among those learned women who read big books, and, what was more, discussed them, she felt a fool.

In a mirror opposite she saw herself like a panel picture—a full bodied shape, in perfect blue, with a vivid face, dark-eyed, carmine touched, framed by rich dark hair, and a charming hat. Beautiful! Oh, yes; very beautiful. The most perfect woman in the room—perhaps she had always been so. Hitherto she had taken every reasonable means to preserve and enhance them. She had felt that as far as she was considered, beauty was almost everything, and yet every one of these women was impressing upon her the fact that beauty was of so little moment that if the inside of your head was well furnished, the outside needed no attention. What was beauty? Miss Shopland was telling her with delicate consciousness that beauty was a mere garment which faded, wore out, fell away and left the soul naked. God pity the soul that could not bear this unveiling! On the other hand, intel-

lect was light. Set a light within the ugliest vase and straightway the vase glowed with loveliness. Even the charm of this room depended upon light. Take light away and no dun-goon could be more unrevealed.

With every passing moment Edith Bland grew more uncomfortable. At last she became actually miserable. She could not bear the sight of that panel picture of herself. She felt empty, disillusioned, unworthy. What was her beauty worth so long as she lacked wisdom? Her thoughts went back to her innocent childish vanities, to her later conquests, to the time when John appeared and first told her that she was beautiful. Would he have loved her if she had not had those eyes and that mouth? She shivered. Suppose she lost her beauty by accident suddenly, would he still love her? If that was all of her he loved would he not cease to love her when he saw her growing faded, old? Suppose that the thing was beginning to happen already! That morning something had occurred. Her breath all but stopped. He had not kissed her good-by! She

had not thought about it at the moment, but now she remembered with fear. And there were other times and other things which seemed to gather importance in this new light she was gaining. For eighteen years she had been a fearless wife and a happy woman; she had been satisfied with herself and content with what life brought her. Now she was no longer satisfied. Her beauty was going. Gray hairs and lines were coming. She was changing. And since beauty was but a garment that sooner or later would wear out and leave her true self revealed, she must expect to lose what the garment alone had won and kept for her—her husband's love.

After the meeting they crowded round her and asked her to become a member. She shook her head wearily. "I don't know enough," was all she could say. Then she tried to get away. But Mrs. Armitage trotted beside her, talking fast about Miss Shopland's paper.

They parted at the Armitage house, and Edith went to her own. She shut the door softly behind her and as soft-

ly scudded up to her room. She wanted to be alone, to think to get back her balance if possible. She laid her hat and coat on the bed. Then suddenly she fell forward beside them and covered her face with her hands.

A sound aroused her presently. She looked. The door was open and John stood there smiling in upon her.

"Tired?" he inquired. "Meeting too much for you? Guess you found it harder work being intellectual than playing whist, didn't you?"

She stood up. "I couldn't be intellectual if I tried," she said solemnly. She was thankful she was not a crying woman. If she had tears on her face she could not comfort John so calmly.

"No, you couldn't. And I'm glad of it," John said. He walked over to the glass, peered in, and took up her brush. "Ede, do you notice how thin my hair is getting on top?"

"You must get a tonic," she replied. "Tonic! Nonsense! What good would that do? I'm getting old, that's all. You must make up your mind to have an old fellow for a husband from

now on."

She went close to him. "John, I'm getting old, too. I'm getting gray hairs—" Her breath paused on a sob.

He put his arm about her and kissed her. "That's what I forgot this morning," he said. "To tell the truth, I've been harassed lately, but everything's cleared up now. Besides that, I had a bit of good luck today—some money paid in I'd given up looking for. If you like we can go to the city for a few days. The children are all right with Eliza, ain't they?"

"Oh, John," Edith said. She put her arms around his neck and laid her face up against his square chin. "You don't mind my being just as I am, do you?"

He laughed. "I'd mind if you wasn't," he said. "I was afraid you'd catch an intellectual germ over there among the highbrows this afternoon. Look into the glass, darling, and see the handsomest woman in Westmore—and the best loved."

"And the happiest now," Edith said, with her old bright look of contentment coming back.

The Career Of A Dog

By Elsie Endicott

MISS SARAH Stood at the gate of her neat little white cottage and peered far down the dusty road. Miss Sarah was an industrious and energetic spinster so it was not her wont to waste the bright and sunny hours in idleness. Only when she was inquiring for a friend's service or could keep her standing there while she was longing to clean the immaculate rooms. Mr. Graham, the postman, would know of her condition; he knew everybody about the people of the town. He would letters to deliver, but distribute supplies.

postman as his horse, much the worse for 25 years of service, approached at a leisurely gait. "Land o' Goshen if I ain't got a letter fur ye!" Miss Sarah, taking the letter, made hasty inquiries and entered the house; that is, she entered after every fly was carefully whisked away. Meanwhile Mr. Graham jogged on, deeply regretting Miss Sarah's reticence and her secrecy concerning her correspondents.

Miss Sarah read her pretty pink note.

"Dear Auntie—I have decided to go to Europe as a nurse, but I worry me greatly to leave my dog, Cherry. I wonder if you would mind taking him for he is very good? Your loving niece, EUNICE."

"Just like Eunice," remarked Miss Sarah. "She always was notional. Well, I can keep the dog in the shed and he won't be much bother, I guess."

Eunice arrived a week later, carrying in her arms a tiny white dog with very long hair.

"Isn't he lovely?" she asked. "He'll be a nice companion for you, auntie."

"H'm," said Miss Sarah. "Why do you call him Cherry?"

"Oh, because he likes candied cherries so much. Isn't it an original name, auntie?"

"Very," said Miss Sarah, grimly. "What's in that big box?"

"Oh, those are Cherry's things, his comb and brush and ribbons and soap and his medicine," she added hastily.

When Eunice, after giving many directions about the care of Cherry, had departed, Miss Sarah, sighing, sat down heavily and looked at the soft, spoiled, little dog.

"Well, I don't envy myself this job!"

Cherry's first week was an eventful one for him and for Miss Sarah. First

he insisted upon monopolizing Tom's bed, and he barked as only a very small dog can when the injured feline tried to claim his property. Hannah, Miss Sarah's maid-of-all-work, complained of cooking meat in a special way for the exacting Cherry.

"I didn't agree to cook for no dog," she grumbled. Cherry killed three chickens belonging to a neighbor the day after he arrived at his new home. Miss Sarah, thanking goodness that she had never lost her reason to the extent of owning a dog, tried in vain to quiet Hannah and to appease the wrath of the neighbor. Now Miss Sarah could have pardoned Cherry all these offenses, but there was one thing she could not forgive. Cherry, longing for attention, had jumped upon the table, unnoticed by his new mistress and then—Miss Sarah shivered when she thought of Cherry's tiny, pink tongue

coming in contact with her faded cheek. The "little darling's" next crime was devouring a half dozen frosted sponge cakes. The result was appalling. Miss Sarah administered large doses of the medicines, although she did not exactly remember which one should cure which disease, but by using all kinds she hoped for success.

The spinster's nephew, coming to call one day, found the house empty. He felt in the pantry bed for the key, as he knew that was its hiding place. Who did not know where Miss Sarah kept the key? In the sitting room his eyes fell on something soft and white curled up upon the piano. On further inspection this proved to be a dog.

"Great Caesar's Ghost! Aunt Sarah keeping a dog! The world is coming to an end."

He greeted his aunt with "I see you

have a lap dog. I've been feeding him a little candy."

"Harry," sighed Miss Sarah "don't speak of that creature. He belongs to Eunice. I wish to goodness she had stayed home and played maid to him! She as a Red Cross nurse. I've just been out to buy him some candied cherries. Did you ever know of a dog that liked cherries? Did I hear you say you had given him candy? Mercy on us! If you've made him sick again sick, but cherries never do."

Harry choked back a laugh at his aunt's dilemma, saying cheerfully, "Never mind, auntie. I know Eunice. In three months she'll be back and you will be free."

"Three months!" groaned poor Miss Sarah. "Harry, he chewed up Hannah's red sash yesterday. Hannah is going to leave. She thought more of

that sash than of anything she has."

"Hurray!" said Harry, whose head always ached when he saw Hannah off the auburn hair wearing a scarlet sash.

"Well," said Miss Sarah, "I hope I've got grit enough to stand him, that's all."

Two months later, when Harry visited his aunt, she told him of her last letter from Eunice. "She's coming home, and I'll be rid o' that dog. I hope you'll be coming out often. Harry, it will be kind of lonesome. Do you bring any cherries?"

Harry was much amused upon receiving a note from his aunt shortly after Cherry's departure. It read: "Dear Harry—I wish you would buy me a dog as much like Cherry as you can get. I will give you the money next time I see you."

"AUNT SARAH!"