

That Livingston Girl

By CONSTANCE CAMERON

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A certain golf club on Long Island has a pretty mite of a house with a deep veranda, a room with a huge fireplace and another where the game may be discussed across snowy tables.

Miss Molly Blake had gone out on the veranda to see if her aunt's carriage was coming. Far and near, through the early October dusk, the mist was gathering.

A stalwart young figure in golf clothes came up toward the veranda, wading to his knees in the mist. "Couldn't find it," he said.

"Oh, pahaw!" answered Miss Blake, who was pulling on her gloves. Then the dainty pink thumb, which had been a trifle obturate, went in all right and



"OH DICK, I—I'VE BEEN SO MISERABLE," she smiled sweetly. "Well, no matter, Dick, I'll get one of the caddies to look for it tomorrow."

"Tomorrow? And I won't be here tomorrow, Mollie." Dick came slowly up the steps and stood beside the little figure in the long carriage wrap.

In the sky a few stars were struggling through the clouds. Behind them in the clubrooms the fire leaped as high as Dick's shoulder, making the veranda doorway a searchlight that could be seen far down the road.

Dick dextrously led Miss Blake out of the doorway into the shadow of the ivy vines.

"Mollie," he said, "you know I'm leaving in the morning before your head's turned twice on the pillow. I'm in dead earnest tonight. You've got to give me some sort of a definite answer. I'm not made of iron or wood. I love you, and I want you to be my wife, and I'm willing to wait till you've had all the frisking around you want, but I must have an answer, straight. If you're playing with me, say so, and we'll call it quits, but don't keep me dangling on like this."

"Dangling on? Why, Dick?" Miss Blake's pretty voice had in it a distinct note of reproach, and she lifted her little nose daintily in the air. "Anyhow," she added condescendingly, while dimples ran riot, "it's absurd of you and me to talk of marrying—absurd! Why, ever since I wore pig-tails and you wore kilts we've played together and been inseparable. I'm as good to you as I am to dinner 365 days in the year!"

Dick listened courteously with his head bent, slowly scraping a putter along a crack in the veranda floor.

"Anyhow," he retorted, "you like me or you wouldn't have been bored with having me around all these years. In fact—he forgot the putter and looked up at her dangerously—"you know you like me—bully well too! And you're perfectly well aware that I worship the ground you walk on."

Miss Blake toyed with the folds of her carriage wrap a bit uneasily and gazed far out on the sound with wistful eyes. "I dare say you think you do, Dickie, dear," she admitted. "And as for me—well, I'll be frank enough to say that I care an awful lot for you. But, you see, I've been thinking gravely. And, Dick, it's nothing in the world but propinquity."

"Propinquity?" echoed Dick vaguely. "Uh-huh," confirmed Miss Blake, nodding the chiffon ruffles in her lingerie hat. "When two people live all their lives on the same street together—next door to each other, in fact, like you and me—why, don't you see, it's quite natural when they grow they should imagine they loved each other?"

"Fol-de-rol! Stuff and nonsense!" threw in Dick disdainfully. "Of course," observed Miss Blake coldly, "you can poke all the fun you want at my theory of propinquity, but—defiantly—"that doesn't alter the case."

"Now, look here, Mollie," Dick volunteered, "I've never for a single second imagined I'm in love with that Livingston girl, and she's lived on the other side of our home almost as long as you have. And a deucedly attractive girl she is too."

Miss Blake tilted her little nose upward until she looked almost dignified. "But she's quite—quite another sort, that Livingston girl!" she replied slyly. "She's not!"

"Not?" "Your style," finished Miss Blake promptly. "You know there are gals and girls."

"Yes," agreed Dick reflectively. Down the roadway carriage wheels began to crunch the sandy ground.

"Here comes Aunt Martha," announced Miss Blake. "I'm a bit sorry I let her call for me tonight, Dick, 'cause I'd have liked awfully much to have you see me home. Then I could have talked to you sensibly and convinced you of this 'propinquity' business."

"Of course I didn't mean to martyr you," said Dick grimly as he led her down to the carriage.

"Now, don't be silly," admonished Miss Blake with exasperating serenity. "Just forget everything you've said tonight, like a good boy, and we'll go on as we've always done, being jolly good friends—eh, Dickie?"

After he had shaken hands with Aunt Martha and the carriage had started off Miss Blake called back gayly over her shoulder: "I'll be coming home in another fortnight myself, you know."

Dick stood for awhile on the veranda after the sound of the wheels had died away. He was a substantial chap with brains, and he reasoned with himself seriously. "She isn't flirting," he so-lliloquized, "but she's wild and doesn't want to be tamed. However—now for a new game."

Some weeks later, after Miss Blake had returned to town, Dick began to drop in at the Blake home again. It was only intermittently, though, and he was not confidential as to where he spent the numerous evenings he did not drop in. Miss Blake would sooner have had one of her fetching dimples spirited away than ask him, but her curiosity changed from annoyance to worry.

"I say, Mollie," observed Dick casually one evening, lighting his pipe and looking absentmindedly at the sweet peas Miss Blake wore, "that propinquity theory of yours isn't such a rum one, after all. Since I've been back I've seen an awful lot of that Livingston girl, and, do you know, she's jolly nice, mighty good company and that sort of thing. I dare say it's being with her so much that—"

Miss Blake half jumped to her feet from the deep armchair in which Dick had piled up for her a sea of pillows. And so it was that Livingston girl! "Hello! A wasp?" inquired Dick, setting down his pipe leisurely and referring to the jump.

No answer. The lamps hadn't yet been lighted, and it was the dark end of twilight, so he couldn't see her face very clearly. But as he piled the two pillows which had slipped to the floor behind the demure little figure with the sweet peas again he caught a tremulous intake of breath. As a matter of fact, the girl in the deep chair was struggling desperately with aggregated emotions of the past month and tears weren't very far away.

"Why—why, Mollie!" Dick exclaimed in some alarm. Then with very real tenderness he put both firm hands under the dimpled chin and turned the little face toward him.

"Oh, Dick, I—I've been so miserable," stammered she faintly. "I've been miserable, too, sweetheart," whispered he, settling himself on the arm of the chair. And then, somehow, those pretty sweet peas got a bit crushed.

"And you don't really care for that Livingston girl?" murmured Mollie presently, pinching his cheek. "That Livingston girl? Humph!" cried he in astonishment.

Even Persian Cats For. Phoebe was the four-year-old daughter of a missionary to Persia, born in that land of oriental ease and hospitality, and her little mind was imbued with such ideas of mutual compliment and her little tongue so given to graces of speech that her New England grandmother had many a shock.

The morning after the little girl arrived at the grandmother's home the old lady was brushing out Phoebe's curls, gazing over her after the fashion of grandmothers.

"My little Phoebe bird!" she said over and over again.

"Why do you call me Phoebe bird?" asked the child at last.

"Here in America we have a bird that says 'Phoebe! Phoebe!'" explained her grandmother.

The child smiled, and her mother, standing by, knew what was passing in Phoebe's mind. Not so the grandmother, who finished her task reluctantly at last and then stooped down for a kiss.

"In Persia," said Phoebe in her most caressing tone, "we have one old cat who says 'Dranma! Dranma!'"

Christmas Waits in England. Christmas waits are a very old institution. The word "wait" was originally the name for a musician or one who played on wind instruments.

Waits were at first annexed to the king's court and sounded the watch every night and in the winter paraded the streets to prevent lawlessness and theft. A regular company of waits was established at Exeter in 1400.

The word is also thought to be connected with the old German "wacht," a vigil or watching.

"Waits" has also been considered as a corresponding word with the Scottish word "waith," which meant wandering or roving, in allusion to the ancient "menstrales" of that country. A remnant of the custom still exists, for magistrates annually grant a certificate to a few musicians, generally blind men,

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