

# LET'S LIVE! MILDRED LAMB

CHAPTER LV  
BYRD decided not to go to Tiny's fancy dress party. She shrank from being seen in public places or in crowds where people would discuss her separation from Larry. She would be unhappy all evening because she would be reminded more strongly than ever that she was now a "single lady."

Chet and Pat would look after her, of course, from a sense of duty, but she would be alone just the same. There would be no one in whom she was especially interested! No one to watch and worry over!

That was positively settled, she thought, one night, as she crawled into her bed. Then she cried a little and felt terribly sorry for herself.

Tiny's visit to the bank the next day changed all her resolutions.

It was just a few days before the party, and Tiny came in all excited about something.

When anything worried Tiny, her hat always responded sympathetically by sitting at the wrong angle. Her hair straggled a little around her red face. Excitement always gave her a debauched look.

"I'm all upset," she announced, sitting down heavily. "Fred's gone and made his usual last minute suggestion and has upset everything."

"What's he done this time?" asked Byrd, amused, but hoping Tiny would make her business short and snappy, for she had work to do.

"Fred's always got big ideas," said Tiny, proudly. "If he would only think of them in time. He wants me to get a couple of Russian or Spanish or Bulgarian dancers to dance in costume."

"It would add to the party," said Byrd, musingly.

"I've been all over town and the vaudeville agencies tell me they have to have two weeks' notice. So there you are," she added helplessly. "What am I going to do about it?"

A novel and very impractical idea had suddenly popped into Byrd's head. She showed it away where she wouldn't think of it again. It was perfectly preposterous!

"I wouldn't disappoint Fred for anything," said Tiny. "He does have such grand ideas!"

"Leave it to me," said Byrd suddenly. "I think I know some one who will dance for you."

"Honest?" asked Tiny, brightening.

"Yes, I'm pretty sure I can get a couple," said Byrd, with a little more assurance in her voice. "I'll see them tonight and let you know."

Tiny looked as if the burdens of the world had been lifted from her shoulders.

"You know," she said, as she was going out of the door, "I miss India. Of course I wouldn't invite her for anything in the world, but she did add pep to a party."

That was what people wanted these days, thought Byrd. They wanted pep, vivacity, speed! Well, she'd show them something, indeed she would!

That night after the dancing class, Byrd lingered at the dressing table.

"You don't mind if I run along do you, darling?" asked Pat. "You know (het worries when I'm late.)"

"I won't be ready for some time," said Byrd. "You chase along, Patsy."

After all the others had gone, Byrd brooded the plan to the Remenoffs. She had a friend who was giving a fancy dress party and she wanted two Russian dancers to entertain the guests during the evening.

"Do you think we might accept the engagement?" asked Byrd, shyly. "I'd love to do it if you think I dance well enough."

"Splendid!" exclaimed Mr. Remenoff. "Splendid! Let would see you the good experience. Let would bring you, perhaps, other engagements."

Mrs. Remenoff was enthusiastic too.

"Since you're masked, no one need to know," she said, "and I believe I've got exactly the right costume for you. I wore it years ago in the Scheherazade and again in the ballet Russe."

The idea seemed now to intoxicate Byrd and an ecstatic thrill

of anticipation poured through her veins. She'd show them that India wasn't the only person who could do things! Why, she'd put it all over India! Indeed she would! She wished now that India was going to be there, just to see how she could entertain and amuse a whole roomful of people.

And she had a strange longing that Larry might be there, too. Especially Larry! Wouldn't that be a satisfaction!

Then her mood suddenly changed and she shivered at the thought of the boldness of the plan. Dancing with a man as experienced as Mr. Remenoff! Suppose she should get stage fright and not be able to do one step! Her head ached a little at the idea.

Mrs. Remenoff brought the costume from the storeroom.

She must try it on then and there.

It was a gorgeous, iridescent affair, embroidered and appliqued with jewels, with long, puffy trousers laced up at the sides in a lacy work of gold, a bodice that went to the waist in a point in the back and a skirt wired so as to hold its many points out, of colored metallic cloth, the whole effect being, as she danced, of an animated rainbow.

It reached its crowning effect in the turban which had a little pair of gold-encrusted wings jutting out at the sides.

The costume fitted perfectly, but the turban was too small.

"The turban set does not feel so well," said Mr. Remenoff, "because of the hair."

Mrs. Remenoff considered.

"We'll try to stretch it," she offered, somewhat dubiously.

Byrd's thoughts were almost visible, and flitted over her face like shadows made by passing clouds on sunlit water.

"I've really wanted to cut it for a long time," she admitted, "but every one discouraged me."

"If it has a natural wave, it would be lovely short. Long hair is more difficult dancing," said Mrs. Remenoff.

"I'll cut it!" announced Byrd, with the courageous look that must have been in Hannibal's eyes as he crossed the Alps.

She made arrangements with Mr. Remenoff to practice with him several times before the party.

The very next morning Byrd topped at a beauty parlor in the athletic building, and, with a sense of terror and misgiving, sat down in the big barber's chair.

In a few minutes her golden hair lay like a summer mist all around the floor.

She had the feeling that she had lost part of her body, or at least, part of her soul.

With a pleased look, the barber held the mirror before her eyes.

How strange she looked! But how youthful! Why, she didn't look one day older than Pat! She studied the reflection long and intently.

With plenty of water, the beauty expert laid in wide concentric circles and then she sat for a half hour under the drier.

The result was amazingly beautiful. Byrd felt a little light-headed as she walked out the parlor under the admiring gaze of all the operators who had been called in to see the finished product.

Byrd's confidence in herself mounted. Now she could dance! This had given her all the courage in the world.

"Be your chest measure," she said to herself, as she went down the elevator.

Mr. Remenoff called for her quite early and she kept him waiting almost a half hour.

Mrs. Kelly and Rosy helped her dress, and as she descended the stairs, there was Martin at the foot of it, waiting to see her.

There was enormous admiration in his eyes for the vision that came toward him, but there was something deeper, too. But Byrd brushed the thought aside. She didn't have time to worry about Martin now.

She could see Mr. Remenoff dimly outlined in the corner of the taxi, and he presented the illusion of a gay Russian youth not more than 20 years old. His clever makeup concealed his 50 odd years. As she sat down beside him he could feel her trembling.

"A little frightened, Karsavina?" he asked, solicitously. "I shall say you are the famous Karsavina."

He said it so earnestly that Byrd

savina of the ballet Russe when they ask after the beautiful little dancer."

"Scared to death!" said Byrd, suddenly weakening.

"It will wear off when you begin," he assured her. "Then you will think only of the ecstasy of the rhythm and the music."

The driveway to the Obermans' house climbed a tiny hill and turned to the right.

There were stone walls on both sides, for Fred insisted that he wanted no neighbors prying into his affairs, and between the macadam and the walls were stripes of garden where even now late chrysanthemums and dahlias were nodding their shaggy heads.

Fred, girded in senatorial cheesecloth dyed by Tiny's pudgy hands, stood smiling as he greeted his guests.

He had to discard his mask to wipe the perspiration from his senatorial brow.

"These are my partner, the Karsavina," Mr. Remenoff, bowing grandly, introduced Byrd. She bowed almost to the floor. "We are to dance for your guests, see not?"

"Sure thing!" said Fred, pleased and almost overcome by their magnificence. "The dressing rooms are upstairs."

Descending a few minutes later, Byrd and Mr. Remenoff stopped a few moments on the landing and glanced over the bright scene that stretched before them.

The floor was a bare, polished surface that drank in the myriad lights that glittered everywhere. Wires had been strung in a maze from room to room, from which were suspended colored streamers of crepe paper and hundreds of tiny balloons that swung in the air currents.

There was a riot of color and movement and music all woven into the picture like bits of bright threads on a huge tapestry. Here were dreams of a lifetime realized in a brief hour.

A real carnival, thought Byrd, a bal masque such as she was continually reading about in the papers given in great cosmopolitan homes. A hundred guests in as many different costumes gave the scene an air of unreality.

Byrd felt as if she had stepped out of her present-day self and was living for a few enchanted hours in the romantic atmosphere of the past, in a phantom world where everything was colored and embroidered for her special benefit and each character had stepped out from a page of the world's history to see her dance.

She wanted to close her eyes and imagine that she was each of the lovely characters that floated around the rooms, now a Cleopatra clinging to her Marc Antony, now a Marie Antoinette on the arm of Louis XVI.

A tremor of excitement passed over her. Among the dreams of her

Fairy Tale Life Ends as Companionate Bride Sees Law Snatch for Her Mate

By EUGENE TRAVIS  
Staff Writer for Central Press and The Statesman

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Jan. 5.—A flyer in the city's night life has proven the trail's end for Johanna Bruce, 23, lovely bobbed-hair girl, whose romance as the companionate bride of a picturesque gunman, bank bandit and mail robber, has been blasted by the exposing of his career after a wild party at a roadhouse.

A typical beauty of the far northwest, Johanna left her home girlhood had been the stage and New York had constantly beckoned her as it did thousands of other girls living sedately in little towns throughout the country.

Here was her opportunity! Now she could play her part! Byrd laughed aloud out of sheer joyousness. Tonight she was going to be the envy of them all. She was going to be gay and elfin and dashing! In the end she would disappear like Cinderella, leaving them gasping and wondering. She had it all planned out!

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bed because of his carelessness in displaying large bills.

His Career Checkered

A checkup revealed that he was wanted in many cities for a varied assortment of crimes. But Johanna's hero refuses to discuss his checkered career, preferring to keep silent until he stands trial in St. Paul federal court for the robbery of a postoffice messenger two years ago, at Hibbing, Minn.

Denying the many charges against him, "Bubbling Over" says, "The only rap against me is for an unfinished stretch in the Utah penitentiary for a bank robbery." Yet sheriffs, federal men and railroad detectives have wired Memphis police to "hold him until we get there."

Back to St. Paul, with the erstwhile playboy of the night clubs, goes pretty Johanna, who confessed to a police matron that Devera was not really her husband—back, perhaps, to her \$22.50 a week job in a drug store—if she escapes without sentence for having her husband's loot in her possession.

Everything Money Could Buy

"So," Johanna has confided to the police matron here, "we traveled, stopping at the more expensive hotels. Then came love and a decision for a companionate marriage."

A squad of detectives seized \$15,000 worth of gems in her possession, more than \$4,000 in \$100 bills, considerable smaller cash and three rings.

Johanna's romance ended abruptly when police took "Bubbling Over's" finger prints after a taxi driver had brought that intoxicated gentleman to the police station for safe keeping, because he feared his fare would be robbed because of his carelessness in displaying large bills.

So, is Bourn—Mr. and Mrs. G. Webster Ross of Toledo, Ore., are the parents of a son, born at Toledo December 23. The father is identified with the state highway department at Toledo and is a son of Mrs. G. Ed Ross of Salem.

Miss Myrtle McClay is unable to attend classes at Salem school because of illness.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Patterson, parents of Mrs. Ward C. Russell, have been seriously ill with influenza.

The Misses Lois and Erma Kerner spent their Christmas vacation with "flu." They are now able to be out again.

CONDOLANCES SENT BEREAVED FAMILIES

KEIZER, Ore., Jan. 5.—(Special)—The Keizer community club has passed resolutions of sympathy for Fred S. McCall and family in the loss of their father and grandfather, Samuel McCall. Friends here also have sent their condolences to Thomas Macdock following the death of his wife, Mrs. Della Maddock.

Although many persons in the community are ill with influenza, which has been prevalent for the past month, the Keizer school teachers and pupils were all present Wednesday when school opened.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hansen, Portland spent the Christmas vacation with Mr. and Mrs. W. Russell, Mrs. Hansen's brother-in-law and sister.

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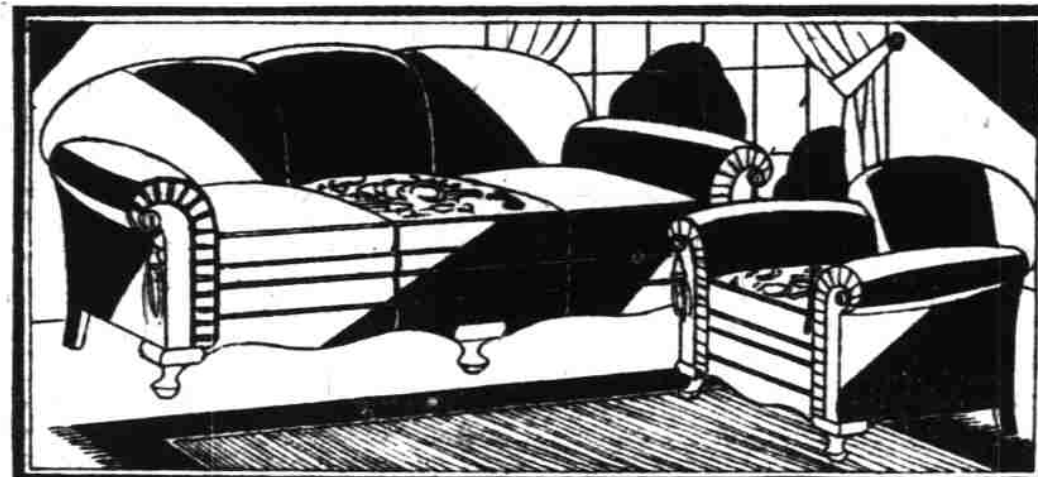
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