

# The Masked Hostess

by BLAIR STEVENSON

**CHAPTER XXIV.**

Nathalie and the harlequin in whose arms she danced went to the dance. The music was a long porch which ran along one side of the house and rested together on a bamboo sofa under Chinese lights.

Other couples were out there in plenty, servants carried trays about, and the air was full of gaiety and chaff and chatter.

"A girl said to me once," announced the harlequin, "that nothing disgraced anyone more than an oval half-mask. When I advised her to go to a masquerade sometime and test if it wasn't true."

"Of course it is," agreed Nathalie. "Neither you nor I know who each other is. Just as we haven't an idea who any of the people about us are."

"And yet," pursued the harlequin, "you don't move out of your relaxed pose at this but hold it—keep your mask on as if it were. And yet I met that same girl outside of a country bank not so long ago when she was as good as masked and knew her at once. And then tonight I turned up here myself with a mask on and danced with her and she didn't know me. Do you consider that playing fair?"

"An Indian who had taken his fill of the firewater that was being served inside came out on the porch and whooped and everybody whooped in unison with him and everybody laughed. While general attention was on him John Sloan lowered his mask and let Nathalie see him and put it quickly back again.

"Noble Indian," he said, "Keep the relaxed pose—hold it. Just like that. That's fine."

"And while I was at the country bank," he continued, "a queer thing or two happened so I thought I'd drift in here tonight and let you know what they were. Fortunately this isn't a particularly difficult house to get into. I know Monte Delaine very well and telephoned him I'd like to come over and we hired our harlequin suits together at the same costumers."

"And rescued me from a frightfully tight corner," Nathalie assured him, "and if only for that I'm frightfully glad to see you. Did you know the woman you took me away from was my aunt?" She kept her pose indolent, as he had warned her to, and kept her voice at a high pitch to match the pose.

"Certainly," he said, "I crashed you when I thought she'd bothered you

enough. And she didn't recognize you. You can be sure about that. I was watching her eyes. I'd like by the way—and he grinned—"to see her face when she learns that your cousin Sylvia and Monty have gone sweet on each other."

Nathalie sat up straight. "Sit back," Sloan warned her. "It's a fact. But not one of the facts I came here to talk to you about."

Nathalie had to hear a little about it, though. "Are they really meaning to marry? She asked, full of interest about it. "Aunt Olivia'll go mad. When? And on what?"

"Oh, on some of Monty's land when he sells it. When I ever. But so far as your cousin's concerned Captain Stefano is out of the picture. Which brings us back to business again for it's Stefano I want to talk to you about."

Her mask covered most of the blush that rose to Nathalie's face and in any case Sloan missed it in the colored light.

"He has been charming to me," she said quickly. "Charming and courteous and kind."

Sloan caught her tone and noted it but went on nevertheless.

"I'm sure of it. And I like him. But over at Brookville where I was working, as I told you if you remember, and so taking notice of everything there was around I automatically took down the number of the car you came there in and it isn't Stefano's car. There is unless he has just bought it and is risking a fine by not taking out a new number. It belongs, or did belong, to a former policeman."

"A policeman?" Nathalie half asked. The image of the man at Southampton flashed into her mind. Then the reflection came to her that the next day she would be free to draw against her bank balance and she sank back among her cushions again.

"A chap named Ferris," Sloan explained, "who seems enormous, very interested in me since he had a man follow me from Brookline after I had talked to you. I would not have known anyone was watching him if Ferris' man hadn't been parked in a car outside the bank and followed me right in and looked me over while I was talking to Pound. He was so clumsy about it, obviously without any business in the bank except to watch me, that I thought I'd find out what I could about him and so took down his car's license number from the window while Pound and I were talking. When right afterward you came to the bank, and while I was in the street, I wrote down your car number too. I was sure—positive

the man was checking up on me when he left his car in Brookville, right where it was standing, and took the same train as I did to New York. So I shook him off at Pennsylvania station—it wasn't at all hard—and later checked up on the car numbers. Both belong to Ferris."

"And who is Ferris?" asked Nathalie. "And why should Stefano drive his car?" Her voice shook a little but she managed to control it reasonably well.

"A one-time policeman, as I said," Sloan answered. "Who is now rather well off and has a finger in a number of pies. He has owned gambling houses and has been in a number of real estate deals and owns a good deal of property. Some of it on Fifth avenue even. But nevertheless, he still does detective work. I found out about him through a law firm he does what he calls 'investigating' for."

Sloan paused a moment. "But the point is," he said then, "that I don't know why Stefano has his car, unless Stefano has hired it from him. It appears—this will surprise you and will a lot of people when it gets out—please keep casual—Stefano is hard up."

"Your're not mistaken? You must be."

Sloan shook his head. "No, I've been sabbing South America, and he is. So my theory is that he either has Ferris' car because Ferris rented it to him, or else that Ferris and Stefano in some way haven't fathomed yet are using him between them and have put him in here. I don't think he knows at all what they're up to. I can't believe it of him. I certainly don't, or even if they're working together; but that I propose to find out. My notion is generally that Pound, working through Ferris, is trying to boost

the value of this place before the foreclosure sale and is financing Stefano to get it talked about. I imagine Stefano, who is proud and has been entertained by everybody on Long Island, has snatched at the chance to come in here and splurge and so pay his social debts. Meantime you watch here and I will watch outside and perhaps between us we will hit on the solution and save this property for you. We had better go inside now, I think."

He left some time during the daylight breakfast which the party broke up and just before the general unmaking which preceded a general going away.

Stefano, still filled with amazement at his discovering who Nathalie was, watched her in suppressed excitement during the post-prandial breakfast, imagining that when all masks were lowered she might, inadvertently, remove hers too.

But she still had it on when he drove away, and as he headed the yellow car toward Meadow Brook he was pondering what interest Ferris could have in her and what he meant by the "piece of change" which he and she were to divide. And how big that might be.

(To be continued tomorrow.)

**Rickey**

**RICKEY, November 19**—The Marion county federated clubs will meet at Silverton Monday evening, November 25, at 8:00 o'clock. Five directors will be appointed and other important business transacted. All members of the Rickey club who can attend are asked to notify the president, Mrs. M. M. Macove.

Miss Margaret Fitzpatrick, a normal student, spent the week-end with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. Fitzpatrick.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen Van Cleave of Portland were Sunday guests of Mrs. Van Cleave's father, D. A. Harris.

Elinore Edwards, of Lincoln and Marjory Drobough of Salem were among the ten red headed girls chosen to act as ushers Wednesday evening at the "open house" held at the Salem high school. Miss Edwards is a granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Edwards and Miss Drobough is a niece of Mrs. O. F. Fryalls of this place.

Miss Edna Fery, the primary teacher, spent the Armistice vacation with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. Fery of Stayton.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Westering of Portland were week-end visitors of Mrs. Westering's parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Humphreys.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Nubam and son Dean of Salem and Mr. and Mrs. C. Davis and daughter Jane, of Mill City, were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Harris.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Kelly and family spent the week end at the beach. Mrs. Kelly is principal of the school.

Quite a number from this community attended the funeral of Mrs. Effie Baker held in Salem Monday. Mrs. Baker had her home here for several years, where she made many friends.

Kathleen Fitzpatrick is one of the three in charge of the production of the "Wonder Hat," a one-act play to be presented by the Sniikpho dramatic society of the Salem high school, in December.

Reginald Rees, who is also in charge is well known here. His

**Silverton**

**SILVERTON, Nov. 19**—Mrs. Clara Rowell left Friday morning for Burns where she will open another shop. Mrs. Rowell is proprietor of Midway's Shop at Silverton. Mrs. W. E. Davis, who has been assisting Mrs. Rowell in her local shop, will be in charge here for a time at least.

The American Legion post and the auxiliary will hold their regular semi-monthly meetings Monday evening at the Armory. This is social night and it is expected that a large number will be out. Returns from the Armistice day, dancing and from the turkey shoot which will be held Sunday will be reported upon.

Mrs. Tom Riches left this week for San Francisco where she will visit with her son, Lloyd and family, for a month. Mrs. Riches is making the trip down with Mr. and Mrs. R. Meeks who have been visiting here for the past two

## WORD HUNT

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In the English language there are **FOURTEEN WORDS** (each having just six letters) that begin with the letters **BAN**

One of them is **BANANA**  
YOU supply the others.

2	B	A	N		
3	B	A	N		
4	B	A	N		
5	B	A	N		
6	B	A	N		
7	B	A	N		
8	B	A	N		
9	B	A	N		
10	B	A	N		
11	B	A	N		
12	B	A	N		
13	B	A	N		
14	B	A	N		

NOTE: Proper nouns, obsolete and archaic words, extremely unusual technical and scientific words, words that would offend good taste and those plurals of nouns and singular verbs that are formed by the addition of, s or es, are purposely excluded from Word Hunts.

Turn to Classified Page for solution of Word Hunt

mother, Clara Rees, taught here two years ago.

The Portland Gas & Coke Co. will run a line in the near future from Salem as far East as the A. LaBranche filling station.

Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Brougher attended the family dinner at the A. S. Brougher home at Scotts Mills Saturday.

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## INCREASE CHANCES OF HEALTH—BANISH DIRT

A Clean Body and Home Will Prevent Many Human Illnesses, Says Authority, Urging Cleanliness Be One of First Lessons Taught Children.

By **ROYAL S. COPELAND, M.D.**  
United States Senator from New York.  
Former Commissioner of Health, New York City.

**IN UNCLEAN** air and food lurk many dangerous enemies of mankind. Not long ago one of the world authorities on health said this: "Every victory over dirt is a victory over disease." Germs cannot breed where there is utter cleanliness.

I wish this were absolutely the fact. If it were, the fight against disease would be much simplified. Unfortunately, the cleanliness of air and the purity of food may become contaminated.

To prevent such contamination is one of the chief duties of man.

There is little danger of disease production from foods which are cooked and promptly eaten. It is another story with food and drink served raw or cold. At ordinary temperature the germs harmless in limited number, will multiply so amazingly as fairly to teem in the food.

But it is a fact that germs thrive in dirty, dark and dusty places. In this sense dirt is a breeding place for the agents of disease and death.

Soap and water, sunlight and fresh air, are deadly to germs. The germs even of dread tuberculosis, are killed by a few hours' exposure to sunshine.

A few weeks ago I visited the slums of a European city. It is almost unbelievable what I saw there. The floors were littered with paper, rags, remnants of food, shreds of mattresses and even some of the inmates' possessions in kitchen stoves. A single window opened into a shaft that somewhere above the surface of the earth led to the outside world. But almost no air came into the cellar rooms.

In one such room there were eight persons, and the stricken father was coughing and spitting, a victim of tuberculosis. The motto on the wall, "God, Bless Our Home," seemed almost a mockery. Certain and early death faces every member of that filthy home.

There is excuse for poverty, but not for dirt and disorder. Many diseases can be wiped out by the practice of cleanliness. Cleanliness is indeed next to godliness, and I say reverently that no home can be blessed by the Almighty unless cleanliness reigns there.

One of the earliest lessons to be taught our children, at least I think so, is the importance of cleanliness. Clean hands and bodies, clean teeth and nostrils, clean food and drink, clean clothing and bedding, clean dishes and clean homes—cleanliness will prevent many human illnesses. Its practice will add months and even years to any life.

**Answers to Health Queries**

**C. M. F. Q.**—What would cause small black spots before the eyes and a weak dizzy feeling upon stooping or running?  
A.—What causes small red blotches on the arms and back?  
A.—May be due to a circulatory disturbance or biliousness. Improve your health in general and keep the bowels active.  
A.—It would be difficult to diagnose the trouble without a physical examination. May be due to liver, constipation, etc. Correct the diet and keep the intestinal tract clear.

**YOURS TRULY, Q.**—Is it advisable for first cousins to marry?  
A.—Not as a rule—the relationship in this case is too close.

**M. E. Q.**—How can I reduce weight?  
A.—Weight reduction is merely a matter of self-control as regards the diet. Exercise is, of course, essential.

**D. H. M. Q.**—What can be done

## POLLY AND HER PALS



## "Paw's Reign Over China"



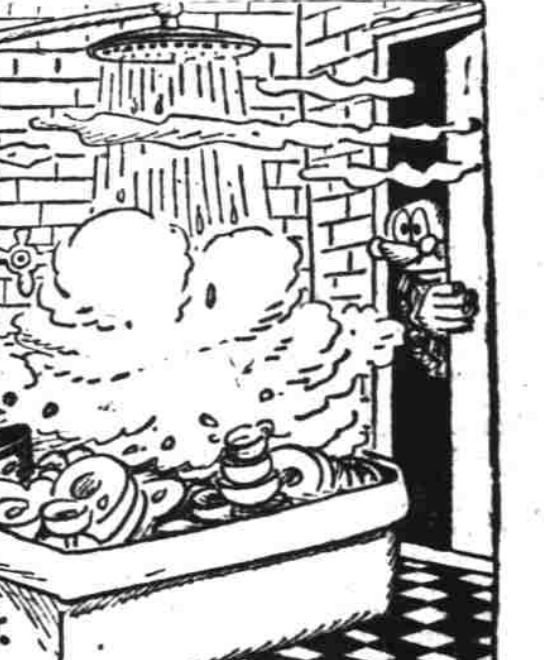
## "The Big Attraction"



## "The Wit of the Irish"



## "The Long and Short of It"



## TILLIE, THE TOILER



## LITTLE ANNIE ROONEY



## "The Long and Short of It"



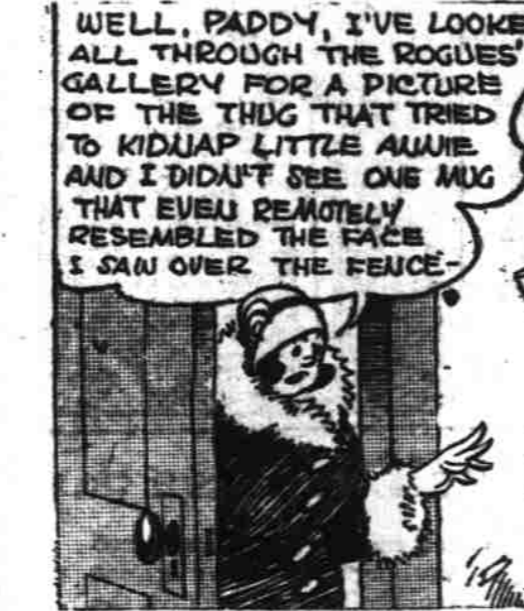
## TOOTS AND CASPER



## By BEN BATSFORD



## By CLIFF STERRETT



## By RUSS WESTOVER



## By JIMMY MURPHY



## By JIMMY MURPHY



## By JIMMY MURPHY

