SOPHIE KERR'S GREAT NOVEL

"STAY OUT OF MY LIFE!"

By Sophie Kerr

CHAPTER XXXVII

"NO, I won't think about that, I won't think of it for one second. I want another reason to make you look out for yourself. If we had a child you'd not take so many risks. You'd not do extra foolhardy things—"

"A war isn't exactly the place to be cautious."

"A war is exactly the place to be cautious. A dead soldier's no use to his country. Those young British officers who lead their men over the top with a swagger stick! Magnificent in one way, but a fearful waste of good material if they want to win. You'll never be a coward, not for yourself, but you're being a coward for me. You're going into an adventure of life and death. I have a right to my own life and death adventure. That's not sentimental tosh either. It is true."

"Yes," he said at last. "It is true."

They were very pitiful, those two, in the last hours of Howard's stay. They were stoically calm. They invented small busy duties about the house and when Amy packed his bag she sent him down in the garden with Nancy, but that was a mistake, for she could hear their voices and the tears she had dreaded could not be held back. She had to stop again and again and wipe them away to see her painful task. But at the end of it she washed her face and went down smiling. He was to leave on the train that his mother would arrive on, for Mrs. Jackson had been afraid of her own courage and had so arranged things that she would see him for that one moment only. She had been generous, too, in giving his time to Amy. And Professor and Mrs. Lowe left them alone until the time came to go to the station. Other faculty members and some of their friends were waiting for them there. Edgar Moreland wrung his hand. "I may be seeing you before long," he said. "I'm going in."

As a small anxiety takes the sharp edge off a large one, so the necessity of making sure that Mrs. Jackson didn't miss Howard relieved the party. Amy stood by Howard's side, touching his arm, but she did not hold it. If she had held it, she would have clutched and dragged him back with all her strength. She knew it. They had said their goodby at home, alone. At the car steps they kissed once, and then she stood back, beside his mother. The two women watched the train pull out, looking at him as he leaned from the window until, so very quickly, he was gone. Then they faced each other with bleak composure, fearful of speech.

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It was Mrs. Lowe who took charge of the situation. Pretending anxiety over Mrs. Jackson's baggage, she set her and Amy both to making inquiries. Then she took them back to Amy's home, talking all the while of trivialities.

Once there, Amy had to be busy and Mary Jackson put on an apron and helped. "It's nice to be in a kitchen again," she said. "I was getting sick of boarding houses and hotels. I may be pretty awkward at first. You were very good to let me come, Amy."

"I'm thankful you could come," Amy told her. "I couldn't shut up the house and stay with mother and father. They love me too much. They're so close to me it kills them to see me unhappy. You love Howard the most. I won't feel you breaking your heart about me all the time. I'm sure they're relieved I'm staying here. You understand. It's too much strain on all of us."

"My dear," said Mary Jackson, "I understand very well. Love is much harder to endure than hate, and what your parents feel for you I feel for Howard. If you knew what it has cost me to leave him free and not hang on him and depend on him and simply cramp my life on his—it wasn't fun, you can believe it."

"Oh, why didn't you come sooner and be with him? I ought to have insisted—I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to crowd you out. Really I didn't. I didn't think."

"No, I didn't want to come. I only wanted the one glimpse of him. I couldn't have stood any length of time with him, any more than you can stand being without your parents. I'm selfish about Howard—I feel so outraged and—and violent about his going into this war. Even when I think that there are hundreds and thousands of mothers who are giving their sons, it doesn't change my feeling. There's no consolation in other people's trouble for our own."

"That's exactly what I've been saying to myself, but I didn't dare say it out loud. I'm glad you said it. And I wished, I can't tell you how much I wished and hoped that he'd be rejected—I mean by the physical examiners. I hope still that he won't be able to pass the air tests. Ground work isn't as dangerous as actual flying."

(To Be Continued)

At Walterville

WALTERVILLE, Aug. 28.—(Special)—A family reunion and picnic was held for the Willian family Sunday at Hendricks bridge and over 80 relatives and friends gathered for the day for a visit.

Relatives came from Camp Creek, Eugene, Culp Creek and Walterville and included Mrs. T. H. Willian, Roy Potter, Mr. and Mrs. B. F. McCollum, and grandson Frank Suter, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Potter and sons Junior and Le Roy, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. West and family Zora and Tom West, all of Culp Creek, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Klasnic and sons Rollo, Robert and Jack Potter, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Willian and family, Margaret, Roberta and Janice, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Gustafson of Eugene, Mr. and Mrs. George Willian and daughters Fordyce and Laurel Edith of Upper Camp Creek, Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Drury and son George, Walterville. Special guests included Mr. and Mrs. Andy Bunch and Bud Greer of Wendling who were guests of Mr. and Mrs. McCollum, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wooley of Camp Creek. All of the family of Mrs. T. H. Willian are well known at Walterville having made their home here in years past. In the afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Wooley, Mrs. T. H. Willian, Roy Potter, Mrs. Klasnic and sons and Mr. and Mrs. Ray Potter and family called on Elliot Potter in Deerhorn.

C. L. Scott and Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Scott of Bend, Oregon, came over Friday evening to spend the week-end with Mrs. C. J. Scott at the summer home at Walterville. They returned late Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. George Willian and daughter Fordyce and Laurel Willian were callers Sunday evening of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Page, at Walterville.

Early hops in the Anderson yard are to be finished the first or middle of this week, according to those in the yard. Herbert Smeed of Eugene, former owner of the yard is overseer this year at Anderson's. Mr. Clark of Springfield is weigher. Martha Campbell of Walterville book keeper, and Howard Campbell wire man.

Approximately 150 pickers are at work this year. The hops are reported of good quality. Monday proved a fine day for picking as the sun was hidden behind the fog clouds making it cool for working in the out of doors which so many of the pickers are not used to doing.

Oscar Millican and Robert Millican left the latter part of the week for eastern Oregon to be gone a few days.

Several guests were at the home of Mrs. Mary Smeed Sunday and included members of her family from Eugene and Coburg. They were Helen Smeed, John and Ralph Smeed and Mr. and Mrs. Glen Chamberlain and family of Eugene. Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Mathews and children of Coburg. Guests for a few days this week include Helen Smeed and Elnora Chamberlain, Ralph and Glen Smeed all of Eugene. They are staying over while the hop picking is going on in the Anderson yard.

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