

A Storm in a Teacup

By CLARA DELAFIELD

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Maud Dartley stood petrified, staring at the incriminating object. Oh, perhaps we'd better begin at the beginning. Hop Sing was—

No, better start with the Dartleys and the Jetleys. They lived next door to each other in Ropertown. Each owned an identical frame house, painted green and black. Each had the same strip of lawn. They were, in fact, identical suburbanites, and loved each other as suburbanites do.

Each owned an auto and a gramophone, a baby and a baby carriage, and neither owned a servant.

Mrs. Dartley owned Mrs. Dartley, Mr. Dartley owned—no! Mrs. Dartley owned Mr. Dartley and Mrs. Jetley owned Mr. Jetley. Mr. Dartley owned some fine pleated shirts, which Mr. Jetley very much admired.

Mrs. Dartley was giving a party. They know those parties—iced grapefruit with a cherry in it, and unfettered grape juice, and cut glass over and lace doilies. Mrs. Dartley had made the terrible discovery that her lace doilies were dirty. Hop Sing had to be called into instant requisition.

"Thursday, Hop Sing, Thursday!" Mrs. Dartley held up two fingers, and he said "Thursday" very loud, which is, as every one knows, the way to make a Chinaman understand anything.

This was Wednesday night, and Mrs. Dartley had called at the laundry to find out how her doilies were getting on.

There was some trouble about getting in, but Maud Dartley was a determined woman, especially with heathens. She went through the window. She called and called, and then went through the house.

She found Hop Sing in a tiny room, sitting on a box couch. A tiny pipe, a peanut oil lamp and some black pills were beside him. Hop Sing opened his eyes and grinned feebly at her. The arm went round in the air in a peculiar manner. It was just as if Hop Sing had imagined that the air was her waist.

Mrs. Dartley, dreadfully shocked, ran back into the laundry.

"That's what comes of opium smoking," she said with conviction. It's almost as bad as beer drinking."

It was clear she would have to attend to the doilies herself. Hunting about the shelves, Mrs. Dartley suddenly came upon her husband's things. She recognized them immediately by the pleated shirts.

Suddenly her heart gave a bound. Among the shirts and collars which Mr. Dartley had done up himself, as was his custom, she saw a pink silk waist. And then her heart seemed to stand still.

That pink silk waist was Mrs. Jetley's!

"Monster! Oh, what does it mean!" she whispered, as, forgetting the doilies, she tottered homeward. She had trusted Mr. Dartley too well. She had left him look after his own laundry, which is the height of confidence in a devoted wife, and he was sending Mrs. Jetley's waist with his things!

There was no mistaking that pink silk waist, which had flaunted itself over innumerable unfettered grape juice tables. His guilt was clear. Mr. Dartley was paying for Mrs. Jetley's laundry. Worse, he was sending it with his.

What a scandal if it became known in Ropertown!

She hurried home, her eyes brimming with tears. But when she reached the strip of lawn before the house she recoiled. There sat the monster, with Mr. Jetley on one side and Mrs. Jetley on the other, smoking cigars and drinking cool drinks, chatting and laughing as if the world had not suddenly tumbled about their ears.

She crept round toward the back of the house under the shelter of the big locust trees. Inside, she paused uncertainly. How could she nerve herself for the denunciation which it was her wifely duty to make?

And yet it had to be made.

She stood in the hall. The voices of the men came floating out to her. "I guess that's one on you, old man," laughed Jetley. "I found out the place all right, all right."

"You did, confound you?"

"Sure I did, Dartley, and say! I got a dozen of the prettiest pleated shirts you ever saw, a trifle shop-soiled, but just like yours, and old Hop Sing's doing them up for me."

Maud Dartley gasped and stood on the stoop of the house.

"Hello, dear! Why, what's the matter?" asked her husband.

"Oh, darling, I—I can't get the doilies, and I don't know what we'll do tomorrow!"

Speed of Migrating Birds.

Migrating birds do not fly at their fastest. Their migration speed is usually from 30 to 40 miles an hour and rarely exceeds 50. Flights of a few hours a night, alternating with rests of one or more days, make the spring advance very slow, averaging for all species not more than 23 miles a day, but with great variations of the daily rate among the different species. The exact number of miles which a particular bird makes during one day's journey has not yet been determined and cannot be ascertained until the tagging or banding of birds by means of metal rings is carried out on a far more extensive scale than has yet been possible.

The Kind He Hadn't Met

By JUSTIN WENTWOOD

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Charles Murgatroyd was out of his element, and he made no bones about it when he woke to consciousness in the best private room of the hospital, to find that he had fractured two ribs, one leg, and a collar bone in the auto accident, and was doomed to a stay that seemed almost eternal.

He hated the routine, and he could not understand why the nurses did not run to obey him.

"I tell you I must have a drink, Miss Mullins," he declaimed. "I am used to it. I'll become a physical wreck without it. It's medicinal—it's—"

"Oh, Doctor Richards, Mr. Murgatroyd thinks it's time he had another drink," said Miss Mullins to the house surgeon, as he came into the room.

"We'll let you have one after dinner," said Richards. "How're you feeling?"

"Feeling? There's no feeling about this place," growled Murgatroyd. "Of all the incompetent fools I've ever met, that nurse of yours heads the list."

Miss Mullins smiled. "Perhaps Mr. Murgatroyd will think more kindly of us when he gets better," she said.

Murgatroyd was helpless in her hands. She made him take castor oil. She wouldn't let him shave with his left hand. She, in short, bullied him in her quiet, efficient way, and Murgatroyd grew more and more puzzled about it.

"I can't understand you, Miss Mullins," he said a week or two later. "Here I've been cussing you in blue streaks and you've never turned a hair."

"We're trained to stand cursing, Mr. Murgatroyd," answered Miss Mullins, a little primly.

"Why are you so stand-offish? You folks don't seem human," he growled.

"Don't you think what you call human may be a little inhuman, Mr. Murgatroyd?" she asked.

"What do I call human?"

"Why—why, hitting it up, and—and drinking and having a good time," said Miss Mullins quietly.

Murgatroyd sneered. "So my reputation has preceded me, has it?" he demanded.

"You must forgive me, Mr. Murgatroyd."

"What have you heard about me?"

"Do you really wish me to tell you?"

"Everything—please."

"Oh, Mr. Murgatroyd, I'm taking a liberty, I know, but—but I know you gave fifty thousand dollars to the Children's fund, and—"

"Just a whim. Well?"

"And it seemed so sad, so unhappy that you should live without—without understanding life. Those things aren't life, drinking and—and you, you know what I mean."

"Women, eh? See here, Miss Mullins, I've never yet met the woman whom I'd raise my little finger for. They're all alike, after the money and the gay time."

"Some may not be," Miss Mullins looked at him tearful, angry, resolutely.

Murgatroyd stared at her. "Maybe you're right," he muttered.

The day before he was to leave the hospital he said to her: "Miss Mullins, we've got to be pretty good friends while I've been here. And I've been studying you. Will you forgive me if I say that I was base enough, when you first spoke to me about things to judge you as I should have judged the other women of my acquaintance?"

"You mean, Mr. Murgatroyd?"

"I thought you were trying it on. Don't be angry with me for saying that. I've repented in dust and ashes, and that's in the nature of a confession. Miss Mullins, I do believe there are different women in the world—only I haven't been lucky enough to meet them. And I'm so glad I've met you and I want to show it by—by asking you if you'll—marry me."

Miss Mullins cried a little. "I am so sorry," she faltered. "I—I—"

"So the proposition doesn't appeal to you?" he asked.

"I'm engaged to Doctor Richards."

Murgatroyd was silent. Suddenly he burst out furiously.

"You were playing with me, then?"

"I wasn't!"

"What did you want to prech to me for? I tell you all you women are in the same. You were leading me on, in your own way just as those other women led me on in theirs."

"Please, Mr. Murgatroyd."

"There, I'm sorry. Forgive me. And—will you please leave me a little?"

asked Murgatroyd humbly.

And he sat still in his chair for a long time wondering. Certainly he had lived blindly, as Miss Mullins had said. Certainly he meant to be far more circumspect and decent in future. But—but—

That "but" was endless.

Logic.

"You want more money? Why, my boy, I worked for three years for \$10 a month right here in this establishment and now I'm owner of it."

"Well, see what happened to your boss. No man who treats his help that way can hang onto his business."

—Boston Transcript.

"You make more gestures than are really appropriate in the course of your speeches," remarked the candid friend.

"I'm fearfully busy these days," replied Senator Sorghum, "and the doctor has ordered physical culture."

Strategic Sentiment.

"When Josh went to school," remarked Farmer Cornstassel, "I gave him a fountain pen and made him promise to use it every time he wrote to us dear old folks at home."

"That was nice and sentimental."

"Kind o' practical, too. That fountain pen'll be wore out in a week or so, an' then Josh is goin' to find it slow an' troublesome to write home for more funds."—Washington Star.

A Man and His Mirth

By ANNE WHITFIELD

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The sealing boats were coming in—into Grand bay. Four months they had been at sea, hunting the harps and hoods all the way up the rocky, ice-bound shore of Labrador. They were coming in laden with pelts.

Old Henri Bedard counted them through his glasses from the top of the cliff. Twenty—that was right! No, only nineteen! Was it nineteen or twenty? If it were nineteen that meant tragedy, never far from those sealers' lives. He could not discern clearly, and went on counting.

Along the shore, and by the edge of the tiny pier, those who had stayed at home shook their heads at one another.

"What will Georges Racine do when he learns that his brother Pierre has married the girl he was engaged to?"

"Will he try to kill him?"

"Hey, they are very well matched, that pair. It would be bull against bull."

Marie Racine, the bride, who had turned from the one brother to the other after her first lover's departure on the sealing voyage, sat at the door of her cottage, trembling. She loved her husband, but she had always been terribly afraid of Georges. That was why she had got engaged to him. Georges had demanded that they be engaged, and she had not had the strength to refuse him. Besides, Georges had dominated her, as he dominated every one in the port, by his mental and physical prowess.

What would Georges do? The watchers pictured his elemental wrath, the furious fight that would ensue, though it would be too late. Too late to unjoin those whom the priest had joined. But Marie trembled.

"Take thy revolver or thy knife, dear Pierre," she begged. "But not to hurt him, only to protect thyself."

"No, I am not afraid of Georges!" boasted Pierre, as he swaggered out of his cottage toward the wharf. "I am as good a man as he is—better, else thou hadst not married me—eh, little Marie?"

He kissed her noisily.

"Perhaps that plan is better," sobbed the bride. "But it will be terrible to face him."

"No, there will be no need for thee to face him," answered her husband. "If he as much as casts a black look at thee or me I shall hammer him into pulped wood with my fists."

Marie looked in admiration after the stalwart figure of her husband as he swaggered along the sandy road toward the pier. He passed toward the pierhead, and the crowd, watching the boats, turned their heads and said: "Here comes Pierre Racine."

"What will happen when they meet? Would it not be better to send for the cure?"

"No, let them fight it out."

"Suppose they kill each other?"

"That can hardly be. If they have knives, we must disarm them. Bad blood gets worse by keeping; let them fight it out and be friends."

"That they will never be. Both brothers loved the girl almost to madness."

They listened to Pierre, who was boasting, perhaps because he was secretly uneasy, and wished to keep up his spirits. "Friends, I have nothing but my fists, but I married my wife fairly, and I'll hold her! If my brother Georges so much as casts a black look at me, I'll hammer him into pulped wood."

They looked at him in admiration. There was no one in the village could stand up to either Georges or Pierre.

Pierre roared with laughter. "It will be amusing to watch his face when he learns," he said. "And I shall tell him. I shall say, 'Eh, Georges, dost thou remember the little Marie to whom thou wast engaged?' 'Well?' he replies. 'And now she is married.' 'Married? Show me the dog—' 'It is I, Georges! That is all. And, as I said, it will be amusing to watch his face.'"

The sealing boats were quite near now. They came on with the sun shining on their canvas sails, forming in line as they moved up the harbor, each toward its place on the side of the pier. Foremost came the vessel of old Henri Bedard's son, and there was old Henri, waiting to meet it.

The sails came down, the ships were almost alongside. Voices exchanged hallo. Pierre Racine stood near the head of the pier, scanning to find his brother's ship.

"Eh," croaked old Henri, "there are nineteen of you, not twenty. Who is missing?"

"Eh, yes, to pulped wood, if he interferes with me. I shall tell him," Pierre declaimed among his cronies.

Someone was shouting. "Eh?" The crowd suddenly grew silent. "Georges Racine's ship. Lost in the ice. Georges and his boy." Eh, there would be no fight after all. It was lucky Georges had not left Marie a widow.

Pierre stopped in the midst of his bragging and stumbled homeward. It was almost as if Georges had beaten him after all.

At the Land's End.

Land's End is a desolate strip of land jutting far out into the ocean. It is dotted with sparse fishermen's cabins, here and there a squatter; nobody seems to own Land's End, nobody goes there.

Elihu Reed set his lobster pots and carried his catch across the bay to the nearest market. His father had lived there, too. Land's End was home to him. It should have been to June, a sulken, discontented girl who had alternate moods of joy and laughter.

"June's not one of us," said the Portuguese squatters. "You can see it in her face."

What she was no one knew. She had been washed up from a wreck, 20 years before, a babe, miraculously breathing. All the rest of the passengers had gone down when the ship, ripped by the Needle, sank to the bottom of Deep Hole.

Elihu Reed adopted her. His wife cared for her until she died. Then the girl stayed with her adopted father, cooked for him, kept house. Elihu was not a tyrant, just a somber, religious man with the elemental strength and gloom of the sea in his soul. He never understood June.

"What d'you want to go away for?" he would demand when the girl was insistent. "It's good enough for me; it ought to be good enough for you. Haven't I brought you up as my own girl?"

"I can't stand for it here," June muttered. "I want to see the city. I want a little fun."

It was the cry of youth. Elihu took counsel of a neighbor.

"She'll be ready to settle down when love comes along," he said. "They're all alike at that age."

Love came where no one would have looked for it, in the person of Tom Santley, the neighbor's son, a melancholy, introspective boy who played the fiddle drearily along the dunes, had ambitions which every one could see were destined never to be realized. It was propinquity, perhaps, a chance word or two, a kiss, an embrace—they were engaged.

"I don't see what she can see in Tom Santley," the neighbors said. "I can't see how she can bullyrag him that way, or why he stands for it."

The bitterness of their quarrels spread through Land's End. She gazed at him, flouted him, and still they remained engaged. They were to be married in the summer. Tom was reclaiming land, running up a cottage. And they seemed at mortal strife. What would it be after marriage?

One day an astonishing rumor ran through the community. Elihu had received a letter from the American consul at Padua, or Pavia, or Florence, or one of those outlandish places. June's parentage had been traced. It happened through a man who was spending the summer at Land's End the year before, an artist who painted June's name written inside one of June's baby garments.

June belonged to a wealthy family at Padua, or Milan, or Genoa. They were ennobled, too. They had lost a grandchild, years before, in a wreck, while the father and mother were proceeding to Washington, where the man had a diplomatic appointment. That was how the story ran.

Elihu stood perplexed, holding the letter. At first he did not know whether to tell June or not. He loved the girl in his own fashion, and he dreaded letting her go to foreign countries. Elihu did not trust foreigners; they ran at you with knives, poisoned you, ate snails, frogs' legs and mice, and were generally queer.

He decided it was her right to know. "There y' are, June, my gal," he said, flinging the letter down on the table. "Now you can do what you've long had a mind to do. You've always kicked against the pricks in Land's End. Go and take whatever's coming to you."

June read the letter, white of face, tense lipped. Then Tom's flute was heard and she shuddered. Tom was coming in.

"Don't let him know!" whispered June.

"I guess he'll have to know," said Elihu.

"I—I'm not going," said June. "I—I only wanted the right to go, if I chose—not to go. I love Land's End."

Tom came in, looking uncertainly at his betrothed; he feared her temper. June flung the letter into the stove.

"Hello, Tom!" she said, kissing him.

Just that. But the look in her eyes told him that the past was dead and forgotten. With arms linked they left the cottage and paraded across the dunes toward the sea.

"Well, I'm swished," said Elihu. "June always was queer. It's that there foreign blood in her."

His Inquiry.

"Say, what's happened to that kid?" demanded Gap Johnson of Rumpus Ridge. "He looks different from common, some way."

"I've just made him scrub his face with soft soap and hot water," replied Mrs. Johnson.

"That so? What was your ideo?"

You ain't expecting that he'll be took sick and you'll have to call the doctor for him, are you?"—Kansas City Star.

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When Fortune Knocks.

Chester Baynes leaned back in his seat in the railway compartment, hot and uncomfortable. It was a willing July day, and he had come twenty-seven miles on a disagreeable journey.

Baynes was district attorney for a tiny rural territory that had practically no criminals, and he had regarded the job as a sinecure until "Dopy" Troop, a notorious criminal, saw fit to turn his activities to his direction, and, entering the house of an old lady, murdered her in cold blood and got away with a haul of several thousand dollars' worth of jewelry.

The old lady in question happened to be highly connected with certain influences. Wherefore, on the fifth day after the occurrence, when "Dopy" appeared to have made his getaway successfully, Chester Baynes received a summons to the capital to undergo a grilling at the hands of the governor.

He took with him the chief of police, who had been a grocer, and whose severest task had hitherto been the impounding of stray dogs and the pursuit of urchins caught in