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A QUARANTINED QUARREL

Showing That Love, Not Unlike Other Diseases of a Catching Nature, May Profit by Quarantine.

By **ELEANOR PORTER**

Author of "Pollyanna," "Just David," Etc.

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THE airy indifference of the girl's manner and the stilted pomposity of the man's words made the quarrel a comedy; the ache in the girl's heart and the choke in the man's throat made it a tragedy.

Rainsford, his head high, thrust the discarded diamond into his pocket and strode into the hall. It was at that moment that the fussy little doctor from the village came down the stairway.

"There is no doubt, madam," he was saying to Mrs. Kenton, who was close behind him. "It is a well-developed case of diphtheria and the very greatest caution is necessary."

The man in the hall below caught up his hat and stalked to the outer door.

"Here, here, Mr. Rainsford," called the doctor, agitatedly, "you mustn't do that!"

"Mustn't do what?" he demanded, throwing wide the door.

"You mustn't go out, you are quarantined."

"Quarantined!"

"Yes, sir—quarantined," reiterated the doctor. "There is a case of diphtheria upstairs and not a soul can leave this house until—until I give permission."

At Rainsford's dismayed ejaculation Mrs. Kenton came quickly forward.

"My dear boy," she soothed, "don't let it fret you for a moment. We shall be delighted to have you with us. Just think, you will be a regular golfer to us through all these lonely days ahead; and Dorothy—it will be so nice for Dorothy."

"But, Mrs. Kenton, I can't—there are reasons why I—"

Rainsford paused irresolutely.

"Nonsense—not a word! Come—run into the other room to Dorothy. Hardly conscious of voluntary movement, Rainsford found himself a moment later facing Miss Dorothy Kenton, who sat limp and silent, upon the living room sofa.

"You heard?" he asked.

She nodded her head.

"Pleasant prospect—for you," he observed.

"But what—what are we going to do?" she faltered.

His hands executed an expressive semicircle.

"But it—it's ridiculous," she continued, with some heat. "The idea of our being shut up in the same house in this absurd fashion now; if it had been before, why—"

"Oh—transgressed, that time, didn't she?" she said, her cheeks crimsoning.

For some unaccountable reason his spirits rose.

"Can't help it—it's a case of quarantine," she rejoined.

At that moment Mrs. Kenton came into the room.

"Well, well, children, this is an experience, isn't it?" she exclaimed. "I don't suppose it will trouble you much, though," she went on with a faint smile.

"What did the doctor say of father?" interposed Dorothy, with feverish eagerness.

Mrs. Kenton's face lengthened.

"Well, it's diphtheria—and that's bad; still, he says it's a light case. We are fortunate in having Miss Merriman—she's a fine nurse. But I do wish Doctor Kane was here. We've sent for him, however, and if he's in the city he'll surely come. This is the first time anything like this has ever happened when we've taken a cottage at one of these summer places."

"And my being thrust upon you in this absurd fashion is anything but pleasant for you," asserted Rainsford.

"My dear boy," remonstrated Mrs. Kenton, "we're delighted! Of course I shall have to be with Mark more or less, and I fear you two will be left pretty much to your own devices, but I presume—"

"Ke—mother," Dorothy broke in hastily, "I can help, you know."

"There's not a thing for you to do, dear, except to make it as pleasant as possible for our captive here."

The house was very quiet when Rainsford came downstairs the next morning. He fingered the books on

the water table, picked up a magazine, dropped it, then wandered out to the veranda, which extended around three sides of the house.

"Well, by Jove," he muttered wrathfully, marching to and fro, "I'll stand this thing just one hour longer until I see Mrs. Kenton, then—I'll run for it!"

His feet were brought to an abrupt stop at the extreme end of the veranda where an open door led apparently into the kitchen. Kneeling before the stove was Miss Kenton.

"Since when have you been a fire-worshiper?" he asked.

Miss Kenton laughed merrily.

"Jack, what's the matter with this stove? I've opened all the slides and doors I can find, but—"

She stopped suddenly her cheeks scarlet. "It is going very nicely now, Mr. Rainsford; you needn't trouble," she said frigidly.

Again Rainsford's spirits unaccountably rose. He stepped into the room and peered into the grate where three charred sticks smoked with occasional splits of fire. "This might make a slight difference," he observed gravely, reaching up and turning the damper in the stovepipe. A minute later, with the aid of some small sticks he had the fire burning briskly. After being assured that the sick man was no worse, Rainsford said:

"Might I inquire—without exceeding the limits of our prescribed fellowship—if this is your usual morning pastime?"

Miss Kenton's eyes flashed and her chin rose perceptibly. "The cook has gone," she replied, "with some dignity."

"Gone?"

"Yes—ran away in the night—"

"And Nora?"

"Gone!"

Rainsford gave a sharp ejaculation.

"The miserable cowards—to leave you like this! What are you going to do?"

"Do? I'm going to get breakfast—perhaps you'll run now," she finished, something like a twinkle in her eyes.

"You couldn't hire me to," he returned, with a promptness that gave no hint of his recent determination quite to the contrary; then he added: "I can make fine coffee, Dorothy, and—"

"I can get along very nicely by myself, Mr. Rainsford," interposed Miss Kenton, with sudden hauteur.

"Oh—transgressed, that time, didn't it?" murmured Rainsford, cheerfully.



"Mustn't—Go—Out!" returned Rainsford Stupidly.

with uplifted eyebrows, as he picked up the basket and went into the shed for more wood. Dorothy looked after him for a helpless moment, turned, and went into the pantry. She was standing irresolutely before the empty bread jar when he came back and peeped in at the door.

"Might make a corn cake," he suggested.

gested.

"Why, I've forgotten—I did know how once—but there's a rule—it must be somewhere," she replied disconsolately, poking inquiring fingers into the drawer at her left.

"I know how," announced Rainsford, airily; "still, I'd have to have mother's old dish with the two cracks and a nick in it to tell me how to measure the things," he added with a mischievous glance.

Miss Kenton's back stiffened.

"I learned at cooking school, of course," she began, with some dignity; "but I have not practiced any of the things lately, only rabbits, and creamed things, and a cake now and then— Oh, here's the book!" she finished.

When Miss Kenton came into the kitchen a minute later she found an array of raw beefsteak, cold potatoes, and a cantaloupe on the table.

"Found 'em in the refrigerator," chuckled Rainsford. "I'll broil the meat when the time comes—done it lots of times in camp; I know how to fix the potatoes in great shape, too," he added.

"Oh, that's fine!" cried Dorothy softly, almost clapping her hands; but the tips of her fingers had scarcely come together before the smile left her lips and eyes. "I fear you are giving yourself too much trouble, Mr. Rainsford," she said, in quite another voice.

"Trouble? Not at all—not at all!" disclaimed Rainsford, cutting the melon into nicely calculated portions. Miss Kenton was silent for a moment, then she said shortly:

"The cornmeal is out—I can't make a corn cake."

"Him—what's the matter with doughnuts? I'll fry 'em."

Miss Kenton looked at him doubtfully. "Well, I might try," she acquiesced finally, turning back into the pantry.

When the round, doughy things were ready, Rainsford, armed with a huge fork, presented himself at the stove.

"I'm here," he announced.

"Very well, you may fry them while I fix another plateful," she said, somewhat ungraciously. She found him a few minutes later dubiously eyeing a half-dozen hard brown rings which were draining on a plate.

"Why, what ails them?" she cried. He shook his head.

"They—they're hard as rocks and flat as pancakes!" she gasped, picking one up and dropping it on the table.

"Perhaps you didn't mix them right."

"I made them straight according to rule," she returned with dignity. "It must have been your frying."

"Oh, but it couldn't have been," he demurred. "I never left them alone a minute. I stopped them ever and over all the time."

A peal of laughter interrupted him.

"Oh—oh—you don't mean to say that you stood there and turned those poor things over every second?" she cried, as soon as she could speak. "No wonder their spirits couldn't rise—and just look at your fat! It's so hot it burned up what little life there was left!"

"Dear me, children, what a good time you are having!" called Mrs. Kenton from the doorway. "When one is young and in love one can find enjoyment anywhere."

Dorothy choked into instant gravity, while Rainsford made a low bow.

"I am in disgrace, madam," he said meekly. "I am guilty of too devoted an attendance upon doughnuts and—"

"Yes, you are," interrupted Dorothy severely, vanishing into the pantry.

At two o'clock a man from the hotel, in response to Rainsford's telephone message, brought a suitcase filled with the various articles he had sent for. The man laid the bag somewhat gingerly down on the extreme end of the walk and hurried away; then Rainsford went down and picked it up.

"How perfectly funny!" exclaimed Dorothy nervously, as he came back to the steps.

"It does seem queer," acknowledged Rainsford.

"Don't you two look contented?" called a merry voice, as three girls stopped at the end of the walk. "How is Mr. Kenton, Dorothy, dear?"

"He is very comfortable," replied Miss Kenton with studied politeness.

"How absurdly idiotic some people can be," observed Dorothy, after a time.

"Very," agreed the man.

Dorothy looked at him sharply; then she sighed and edged in her chair.

"I don't like this deception," she protested.

"No? Then why not tell?"

She gave him a scornful glance.

"As if I could call out across the lawn to those girls: 'We aren't engaged any longer!'"

"Him—well, there's your mother."

Miss Kenton frowned. "She has enough to trouble her now. As things are she'd be dreadfully distressed. I shall have to wait until father is better and you are gone."

"Oh!" murmured Rainsford.

There was a long silence; then Dorothy sprang to her feet. She was almost hysterical with the tension of the last few hours. Things had scarcely improved since the morning. Rainsford had grown quite grave, and scrupulously polite.

"As hostess, I feel it my duty to entertain you," she announced sweetly. "If you'll look under the table on that shelf there you'll find some games. Make your selection and we'll play."

Dr. Kane arrived on the five o'clock train and went directly to the sick room. Fifteen minutes later Mrs. Kenton appeared on the veranda.

"Well, Jack, you are free," she said smilingly.

"Eh—what—how—" stammered Rainsford, growing white and red by turns; there was but one kind of freedom in his mind, and that he had already most unwillingly received at the hands of Dorothy. He glanced at the girl now, but her face expressed only unalloyed joy.

"You mean the quarantine? It's over!" she asked eagerly.

Mrs. Kenton nodded. "Yes; that fussy little doctor was all wrong. It's not diphtheria at all, and your father will be all right in a few days."

"How perfectly glorious!" cried Dorothy. "I never believed father was very sick. Now we'll go off—let's see, what shall we do—ride?"

Rainsford caught his breath. "Yes; or we might go on the lake," he said, in a voice that he tried to make diplomatically unconcerned.

"Or we could play golf!"

"Hm—m; or we've got just time to see the sunset from Peak's hill," he further suggested, with a swift sidelong glance at her face.

"Just the thing after being cramped up all day! I'll get into my walking skirt in no time." And she hurried through the hall door after her mother.

The next minute she was back again with a dismayed face.

"Why, I—I forgot!" she faltered.

"Forgot? Forgot what?" he asked smoothly.

"Why, our—our—that things weren't the same any longer."

"Oh, never mind a little thing like that," he enjoined.

"But I—I was going to tell mother, and now—" she paused helplessly.

"Now—I really wouldn't do it," supplemented Rainsford. "You see, it will be hard to make her understand after what you said just now," he continued, taking a shining golden circlet from his pocket and fingering it nervously. "Hadn't you better put this on, too, Dorothy—she might notice it."

For a minute Dorothy hesitated. The vines were thick and the veranda very secluded, and Rainsford drew her very gently toward him.

"Well—perhaps," she murmured, holding out a slim, sunburned finger upon which he eagerly slipped the ring.

Jots and Tittles

(Continued from page 1)

Miss Gertrude McKern was home over Sunday.

A. C. Kogaburg of Harrisburg was in town Friday.

The Harrisburg baseball team went over and beat Goshen 8 to 0 Sunday.

J. W. Drinkard and wife got home Saturday from their vacation at Newport.

An Albany report says Attorney A. A. Tussing of Brownsville is on a trip to Canada.

Mrs. E. C. Cathcart and daughter Dorothy were in town from Harrisburg Friday.

R. A. McCully, now residing in Eugene, was in town on business the latter part of the week.

Mr. Jordan of Corvallis, representing the Oregon Fire Relief association, was in town Friday.

Mrs. George Starr, who is convalescing, has gone for a sojourn with her mother at Joseph, Ore.

Karl Braunwell, wanting a place for Uncle Sam's postoffice business, bought the postoffice building last week.

Drouth has reduced the yield of practically all crops in the county by one-fourth to one-third, it is estimated.

The county farm bureau has voted \$35 towards the transportation of exhibits by juvenile clubs to the state fair.

Mrs. Forbes and Miss Margaret Dunlap of the Dunlap drug store, Brownsville, visited Halsey in their new car Saturday.

Ross Curry took his mother, Mrs. J. C. Curry, over to Philomath Sunday. They found their son and brother Jesse swamped with work in the telephone office, of which he is the head.

Ed Warmoth and Arthur Robnett went above Cascadia Friday and brought out the limit of fine mountain trout. They hiked in about eight miles to get to the best trout stream. They came home Saturday night.

A man named Clark, employed to care for stock on a farm near Lyons, where he lived alone, committed suicide last week by cutting his throat. He had been thought insane by some and has proved that they were correct.

A moving feature of the open-air meeting at the city park, Brownsville, last week was the address on "Good Citizenship" by Mrs. William Mills, who, holding her little granddaughter in her arms, said she wanted to see that a clean town in which the little child as she grew up could learn to love and respect the law.

(Continued on page 4)

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