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O. W. FRUM

(Continued from page 4)



"What Does It All Mean?" the Girl Whispered.

whispered. There was no doubting the friendship, almost the affection, with which the other men regarded Mr. Milman. There was a sterner air about her father when he faced her than she had ever seen before.

"Nita," he said, "with one exception, all the hurts I've received, all the bad hurts that is, have been from pals who thought they were acting for my good. You've been dangerously near doing that tonight. You've got everything twisted. You have made me appear in a very poor light among men I respect."

There were tears dimming her violet eyes when she looked at him. "Oh, daddy," she murmured, "I only wanted to help you. When you came to my room I said, 'My father and his friends, right or wrong.' I meant it."

"You did not know what you were promising," Milman declared. "Do you mean that if you found your father engaged in doing something the world thought wrong you would take his part?"

"If I thought he was justified, I would."

"Is it fair to involve her?" Bradney broke in.

"Certainly not," Malet decided. "Perhaps you are right," Milman sighed. "I only know that you might have been a great figure in the world of art, and Mr. Bradney would famous as a scientist, and I myself with a fortune and a home, but for the malevolence of one man."

"Did that man injure my father?" she demanded.

"But for this man your father would not have been warned off the turf. But for him the clubs that he had to resign from would have welcomed him."

"Wait, wait," she begged. "I want to think." Naturally it was of her father she thought. She had always defended him against her aunt, but she had never been able to dismiss the accusations as worthless. She had fought because she loved him; not because she believed in him. And now to learn that, after all, his past was not disgraceful, filled her with hope and courage. She was ashamed of herself that she had ever doubted him. There was no sacrifice he demanded of her she would not fulfill gladly.

"Will you tell me all about it?" she pleaded. "No, daddy, not you. You always wander into the bypaths of narrative. Let Mr. Milman tell me."

Very concisely he laid before her what he had told the other men of Paul Raxon and his way of life. As she listened she saw clearly that it was to the malignity of one man that three lives had been ruined and a fourth brought to a penniless old age. She listened attentively to the futile plans they had elaborated and rejected. Perhaps to her fresher and more alert mind these plans seemed commonplace, and doomed to failure. But she knew it was not to commonplace men she listened.

"Now, Mr. Bradney," she commanded, "tell me your story."

When he had finished she said: "Of course it was Mr. Milman who was the unknown giver of that hundred thousand dollars."

Peter Milman turned red. But he could not deny it.

"Why didn't you tell me?" Bradney asked, with reproach in his voice.

"I did not want to influence you. I wanted you to decide for yourself."

She listened to Malet's story and her father's.

"I shall be a great help to you," she said cheerfully when she was in possession of what facts they could give her. "A woman's brains are always useful. You see, she so often jumps to the right conclusions when you men are floundering along in doubt."

"We haven't one idea worth discussing," Malet admitted.

"I noticed that," she laughed. "I think I see exactly how it can be done."

"Nita," cried her father. He thought she was making a jest of it. "I mean it, daddy," she said earnestly. "Fellow-conspirators all, listen."

CHAPTER VII

Paul Raxon knew very well that his sudden success would make enemies for him among the established powers in Wall Street. But he also knew that he was not to be brought low by any combination against him so long as he kept his head and resisted speculation.

For the moment he was content to rest and allow financial writers to

wonder what his next move would be. He had purchased a home built for large entertainments and determined to become known as one of America's great hosts. And with this he would erect a reputation for those domestic virtues which count so much when electioneering. Raxon smiled grimly when he reflected this meant he should be on good terms with his wife. Mrs. Raxon, unaware of his ambitions, was amazed at finding him so reasonably human.

She was not unaware of her own limitations. The idea that she must with a bound become a famous hostess was disquieting. The years had not dealt so kindly with her as with Paul. "I have here," he said one morning, "a list of people with whom I want to establish social relations. At present I don't know a quarter of them except by name."

"Why fill the house with strangers?" she asked.

"Because I want something from every name on this list. We've got to entertain so well that they talk about us. This social racket with me is a means to an end. I'm playing a game, and if you play it with me you can be a great Washington hostess."

"I don't know anything about being a great hostess," she grumbled.

"You've got to learn. I'm counting on you and the girls to be an asset to me."

Mrs. Raxon was afraid of him. She knew he would not forgive her if she failed, and yet was conscious that she lacked ability for the part she was to play. He came of a better family than she. He was never at a loss conversationally. It was wise, she thought, to point out her limitations now.

"I don't expect you to catch onto this social end yet. You can hire a well-bred woman to teach you. When you've learnt all she can teach, fire her and get another. It's a good system. I've used it a lot. Don't expect to consult me. I shall be too busy. I've got to remodel this place so it doesn't look so much like a summer hotel. I'm a little doubtful of the furniture. All Bellington knew was to put his faith in upholsterers. I'm going to make a nine-hole golf course, a

polo ground and a swimming pool."

"Oh, but Paul," she cried, "I shall have to ask you when I don't know."

"Ask me as little as you can," he snapped. "It will cost you money to run this place like a well-oiled machine, but I'm not limiting you. Hire anyone you want to help you."

She looked again through the list of names. Among them were those of whose doings she had read in the social columns for years. Some were equally prominent in politics and finance. The name McKimber headed the list.

"Make the most you can, without overdoing it, of the McKimbers," he commanded. "I want the world to think McKimber and I are bosom friends. Cultivate his wife. She's fat, too, so you can talk calories together. Young R. B. McKimber is more or less a society type and will be glad to find a polo field here when he comes."

"I wish I understood you better," she said a trifle wistfully. She had not been the only woman to say that.

"I'm glad you don't," he said cryptically; "that prevents your giving me away. I'm one of those men whose peculiar joy it is to play a lone hand. If you share secrets, they are only fifty per cent your own."

She was vastly relieved that she had confessed her ineptitudes. She could go the more cheerfully about her tasks now. She wondered why the McKimbers were so important in Paul's eyes. Other names exceeded them far in the social scale as she apprehended it. That he had been chairman of the national committee of her husband's party meant nothing to Mrs. Raxon. Her thoughts turned to Robin, the polo-playing heir to great riches. Well, her own Gertrude was good looking and a great heiress. She felt a spirit of gratitude toward her husband which had long been a stranger to her. Most men hated their wives embarking on deliberate attempts to capture society.

The idea of hiring the well-bred woman came back to her when she felt her butler's sneer. How that man seemed to dislike her. How superior he seemed and how aware of her social deficiencies. Yet she lacked the courage to dismiss him. She opened her mouth as though to frame a sentence which would annihilate him and reduce him to the ranks of one looking for work, when her courage failed. Distinctly there was something to be said for the well-bred woman. Such a one would know how to deal with butlers like this.

"A Miss Brown to see you, madam," said the butler. From his tones it seemed Miss Brown was only less tasteful than his employer. He presented a card on a silver tray. Under Miss Brown's name was penciled, "I am calling at the suggestion of Mrs. Hamilton Buxton."

Although Mrs. Raxon had not been in her native land for some years, she knew Mrs. Buxton's name very well as a distinguished member of the smart hunting set. Also Mrs. Buxton's name was among those to be cultivated. She would see Miss Agatha Brown.

Miss Brown was young, pretty, and delightfully dressed. This was, no doubt, one of Mrs. Buxton's personal friends.

"Mrs. Buxton," Miss Brown began, "thought that as you had bought this lovely place and were going to entertain a lot, you might need a social secretary. I was going to her, but she has taken Lord Kitemanor's hunting box in Leicestershire for the coming season. I have just come back to the United States, where I belong, after spending some years abroad."

"You speak French, then?" said Mrs. Raxon in the Gallic tongue. It was her one accomplishment.

"Yes," said Miss Brown with still greater fluency. "I have been mainly in England. My last position was with the countess of Horsham at Horsham abbey. She was one of the Boston Fessendons, as, of course, you know."

"What did you do there?" Mrs. Raxon asked.

"Literally everything," Miss Brown confided. "It is an immense place, fully twice the size of this, and for three years I managed it from cellar to attic. I wrote the menus, engaged the servants, saw they did their work and dismissed them if they did not."

Mrs. Raxon smiled happily.

"You understand," Miss Brown continued, "that I was not a servant or even a housekeeper. I'm a great believer in social distinctions. They make entertaining so much easier, don't they? Most people think I am a guest like themselves. I have often been taken in groups with even royalty."

With an unaffected absence of modesty, Miss Brown, in the course of half an hour, managed to impress Mrs. Raxon most favorably. "You would find very little to do here at first," said the older woman. "We have no house guests at present, but we are going to entertain a great deal."

"I should find a very great deal to do at once," said Miss Brown emphatically. "To begin with, I should dismiss your butler, who is impertinent and offensive."

Impulsively Mrs. Raxon leaned forward and kissed Miss Brown.

"Dearie," she said, "I need you at once."

"Good," said Miss Brown, without excessive gratitude. "Another thing, if I stay I mustn't be hampered in en-

gaging or dismissing servants. It must be understood that I have complete charge of the household arrangements. I cannot possibly run this establishment smoothly if I am to have the help running to you with complaints. Lady Horsham wanted me to relieve her of every domestic responsibility."

"That's exactly what I want," Mrs. Raxon said enthusiastically. "Where are you going?" Miss Brown had risen.

"To get my trunks. I shall move in at once."

Mrs. Raxon sought out her husband and told him the news.

"Fine," he said. "Anyone recommended by Mrs. Buxton will be all right. I suppose you looked over her testimonials?"

"Of course," said his wife, conscious that she had forgotten all about it and not anxious for him to find it out. You'll like her. She's so distinguished. I don't think she approved of the drawing room furniture."

"We shall agree on that. Bellington furnished it like an hotel reception room. One thing more. It's about McKimber. I forgot to tell you before. If anyone asks you if I have political aspirations, say so. This goes particularly with the McKimbers. You and I know, and that's enough for the present."

(To be continued)

Pine Grove Points

(By Special Correspondent)

Mrs. J. R. Mode of Peoria, who lived at Pine Grove until last fall, suffered a stroke of apoplexy at her home Sunday morning and passed away. The funeral was at Pine Grove Tuesday.

A number of folks from "Stringtown" attended the dance at Mason's dance hall the evening of the fourth.

Miss Pearl Pehrsson came up from Salem Sunday to spend a week at home.

Ida Schick, who has made her home with her aunt, Mrs. McLaren, for the last two years, left last week for Moonmouth, to live with her father.

Mrs. A. F. Albertson spent Monday with her mother, Mrs. Higbee.

Sam Campbell and family of King's Valley and relatives from Albany spent the 4th at Mrs. J. A. Johnson's.

Most of the Pine Grove people attended the celebration at Smith's grove.

Albert Heinrich spent the vacation visiting home folks.

The Pine Grove community meeting will be Friday, July 8. Ladies are requested to bring cakes.

Robert Sieck has purchased the Brock farm, formerly occupied by John Bass, and will move there this fall. The Shepherd place, occupied by the Sieck family, has been leased by Ray Hover.

Boys' and Girls' Club Charters

On approval of their plans of work for the year the following boys' and girls' clubs in this county have been awarded charters by the United States department of agriculture through O. A. C.:

Jolly Boy Bachelor sewing club, Mrs. Coleman leader; Sunshine Sewing club, Mrs. Foote leader; Daisy Sewing club, Mrs. D. H. Sturtevant leader; Grand Champion Sheep club, C. L. Falk jr. leader (these four are Halsey clubs); Little Priscilla Sewing club, Shedd, Olive E. Pugh leader; Linn County Holstein Calf club, Harrisburg, H. L. Brunis leader; McDowell Sewing club, Waterloo, Naomi Swink leader; Knox Butte Pig club, Albany, N. V. Sheiby leader; Saniam Poultry club, Albany, Mrs. Paul Smith leader; Foster Camp Cooking club, Foster, Mrs. Lena Harrang leader; Kill-Kare Kamp Koukery klub, Seie, Ethel Ypsel leader.

Shedd has been the leader in the county in school club work, but the Halsey parent-teachers have had their shoulders at the wheel, seconded by loyal juvenile workers, and four Halsey clubs have won the above honor, while only two winners are credited to Albany and but one to any other community.



Vacation Fares

—for summer outings

Reduced roundtrip fares are in effect throughout the summer season. Tickets with 16-day and season limits; week end, Saturday to Monday, Friday to Tuesday, Sunday only tickets.

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Chorus—That's the way we do. Aren't we jolly jokers? Making money, too. All by being brokers.

Charity and the Poor

Charity in various guises is an intruder the poor see often; but courtesy and delicacy are visitants with which they are seldom honored.—Ouida.

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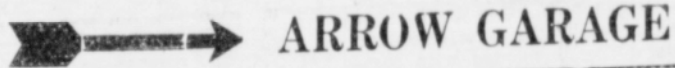
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