

Alabaster Lamps

By
Margaret Turnbull

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WNU service

CHAPTER XIII—Continued

With the pulling together process, Mary hardened her heart. If Mother was going to shut her out completely, she could not, of course, confide in Mother. Ordinarily she might have told her mother a little, if not quite all, about Ned Carter, especially as she had remembered this late in the day Dorothy Selden's warning. Mary would like to know just what it was Dorothy had hinted. But Polly Johnston barred every avenue of approach, and continued to keep the bars up during luncheon. So Mary went to the Academia twenty minutes early, with mutiny in her heart.

Ned stood waiting in the doorway. His face was turned from her as she alighted from her gondola, and Mary had time to study it.

It was extraordinary, the effect this man had upon her. She did not like it. She was used to men, and to their attentions. Why should this good-looking grocer's assistant stir her in this manner? For one moment she contemplated flight. The next moment she rejected the thought as cowardly. Ned caught sight of her, and the look on his face revealed to Mary the extent to which this young man was enamored. Along with all the other emotions, she felt a sudden sense of power.

"Anything wrong?" Ned inquired, scanning her face anxiously.

"Everything! Where can we go and talk quietly until Father comes?"

"We could take a gondola."

"No! We could not!"

"Oh I say—" Ned began.

Mary interrupted. "I simply won't! Do be sensible and help me. What shall I say to Father? Mother found out last night. She was waiting for me when I came in."

"I thought her far too clever to be fooled long," commented Ned.

Mary continued: "Mother sent for—er—telegraphed to Mr. Rangeley, Mr. Loren Rangeley, to join her here."

Ned's exclamation made her look up, surprised. "How can you know what that means?" she asked, astonished.

"I'm not quite sure," Ned managed to say.

"It means that Mother will try to divorce my father and marry that cold-blooded fish!"

"Mary, don't! Loren Rangeley's my father!"

Only Ned's strong arm saved Mary from stumbling, perilously near the canal. "How can he be your father? Why, you're—"

"I'm Ned Carter Rangeley. I quarreled with my father. I told you about that, long ago. That is, I told you everything except his name. You see, I wanted you to love—the grocer's clerk."

"It would be much easier than to marry Loren Rangeley's son."

"Mary! You don't mean that."

"I do. How could that be the reason for calling yourself 'Carter'? You did it before you ever saw me."

"I was tired of being just my father's son. I wanted Claude to like me for myself. Mary, you must believe me."

"I see my father," Mary interrupted. "I'm going to him."

"Not until I—Mary, marry me now, and then your mother won't marry my father, and Claude will have his chance."

"Utter and complete nonsense!"

"It isn't nonsense. You know it isn't. Mary, look at me. Is it such utter nonsense?"

"Father!" called Mary, moving quickly forward. "Here we are."

They moved together into the Academia, and as Ned stopped to pay the fees, Claude and Mary went up stairs together.

"What's wrong, darling?" asked Claude.

Mary put her hand on her arm and drew him into a little room at one side, empty of sightseers for the moment. She noticed, with extreme annoyance, that it contained two or three paintings by Bellini. She feared she would always forget their beauty and only associate them with this most troublesome day of her life. "Mother knows," she said in a low voice.

"Well, that's all right," Claude answered easily. "Polly must know, sooner or later. I meant, what's the trouble between you and Ned?"

"Don't be sickening," Claude warned him, as they moved away toward the entrance. "Where can we three go to talk about our lives in general, and have a little privacy. No churches, no palaces, and no picture galleries," he warned. "My feet ache at the very thought of them, and they are all full of gabby guides." He caused near the gondola steps, and considered a moment. "We can take a gondola."

He was unprepared and a little startled by the mirth of his companions, but continued gravely and without waiting for an explanation, "and go to my sitting room."

He handed Mary in, and turning to Ned, surveyed him coolly. "On second thoughts, which are often best, we'll leave you to find your way there yourself, and slowly. I've something to say to Mary, and," he added with a look that quelled Ned's tendency to rebel, "there are times when a father and daughter actually like to be alone together, though you don't seem to think so."

A fatherly squeeze of Ned's arm helped Ned to interpret these remarks.

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self, and surprise her. But I never did. There was a time, when I had no money, when I really wanted to find her; but after considering everything—well, I just couldn't. Remember, I didn't know about you."

"It kept piling up," Claude continued. "The money, I mean. If a man failed, and I as agent, mind you," he twinkled at Mary over this time-honored joke, "I loaned him money, blamed if his business wouldn't boom. He'd be paying it back to me in no time and I'd have all that spare cash on my hands. Money breeds money. I've spent all I wanted to, in a quiet way. I lived behind the grocery mostly to keep Aunt Lydia happy, but I've had fun building and remodeling houses to suit me. The White house you and Polly lived in was one of them. I own nearly all of Clover Hollow. But, till I met Ned here, I never really enjoyed traveling about and using money on myself. I'm a kind of timid man about some things. With Ned, it's been grand. And you! When I knew about you, I knew what the money was for. Think of the fun I'll get out of just buying things for you! Now that Polly knows you know me, can't we go and do some shopping? I want to buy you all the things I've wanted to hang on somebody—and didn't know you were waiting for me."

"Father, we mustn't be reckless. I can't take it quite all in. How many thousands have you?"

"It runs nearer to millions, Mary."

"Mercy, what will Mother say?"

Claude, watching her face, saw it change.

"What are you afraid of?" he asked bluntly.

But Mary could not, or would not, say. Her father helped her from the gondola.

When they entered the sitting room, he said: "You're not afraid of me?"

Mary shook her head. "I simply love you!"

"H'm, I'm always afraid of those I love getting away from me."

He watched her remove her hat, and then move about the room. It was lovely, she told him, to be in his rooms. Still Claude had a feeling she was not at rest.

"If it's Ned, you needn't be uneasy," he told her, cryptically. But Mary apparently did not hear.

Claude went to the balcony and looked down.

Here's Ned now. Pretty prompt, you are. I said half an hour."

"It seemed half a century," Ned told him, coming straight toward Mary.

"Well, have you talked me over thoroughly, and come to the right conclusion?"

"Funny, isn't it," drawled Claude, as he saw Mary color, "but we had other things to talk about. When Mary mentions it, we'll take up your case. The question to consider just now is, are you prepared to face your father?"

"Father! Coming here?"

Claude nodded, surveying Ned coolly, but avoiding Mary's eyes.

"You see our advantage. We can decide what we're going to do—and pull the strings."

Ned, still astonished, looked at him in silence. He wondered, confusedly, whether this could be the explanation.

Was Claude dabbling the agent for Loren Rangeley? There was no time to follow that train of thought at present, but he would return to it. "I see. Take the wind out of Mrs. Johnston's sails, eh?"

Mary rose with decision. "I'm going back to Mother. Father, you can see that I can't—"

"Can't join in with a lot of men to let a woman down, you mean?"

Mary looked at him dubiously. "I—well, something like that, only—"

"Only you wouldn't have put it that way. That's called sexual antagonism, daughter. Don't you trust me any more than that? I'm a man, but you think I'd hurt you, or let Polly down for any man?"

"Father, it's all perfectly horrid. I'm so mixed up. I love you, and I do trust you, but Mother—well, she's mother."

"Sure," agreed Claude. "It would all be quite plain and simple if Polly hadn't muddled things up. It's the children who suffer from mixed motives and marriages. Well, my girl, we'll make it plain and simple again. All I ask of you is to stay here and give Mr. Rangeley, the elder, some tea, and keep him waiting while I go and talk to your mother."

Mary gasped. "Mother will never see you!"

"I think better of Polly than that," said Claude, and was gone.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

good proportion. A little sugar may be added if you wish. Cut out rounds rather larger than ordinary biscuits, about three to three and one-half inches in diameter, and roll them thin enough to bake one on top of the other. Brush butter on the under round before setting the upper piece on it, and when they are done the two sections will split apart easily. The oven should be hot (450 degrees Fahrenheit) for individual shortcakes, suggests the bureau of home economics.

Prepare the strawberries at least an hour before you need them. Hull them and wash a few at a time in a pan of cold water, skimming them off the top so that any sand sinks to the bottom. Do not allow them to remain in the water or they will lose flavor. Select the largest and most attractive berries for the top layers, sprinkle with sugar and set aside. Cut up some of the berries to be used on the lower layers, mash them lightly to start the juice flowing, and sprinkle with sugar. Butter the shortcake while hot. Add whipped cream, sweetened and flavored with vanilla, just at serving time, or pass it in a bowl as each person is served with the shortcake. Some people prefer this type of shortcake without cream.

HOUSEHOLD NOTES

A loose-leaf notebook subdivided like a cook book is a good way to keep miscellaneous recipes.

Use water and cleaning agents sparingly because otherwise they may spoil finishes and weaken glue, paste or cement.

It will be easier to fit the storm windows next fall if they are marked or numbered with duplicate thumb tacks when they are removed and stored this spring.

DELIGHTFUL FAMILY AUTOMOBILE PICNIC



Why Not Take the Ice Cream Freezer Along?

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Part of the fun of the week-end motor outing is the picnic lunch. If you drive covers much distance there may be two out-of-door lunches. It is a good idea to keep a special basket or picnic box on hand with enamel or paper plates, cups, knives, forks, spoons, bread knife, can and bottle openers, salt, pepper, waxed paper and paper napkins ready for the call of the open. Preparations can be quickly and easily made if these essential accessories are at hand in one place.

There is no hard and fast rule that all sandwiches must be made before starting. Put a loaf of bread, a pat of butter, and whatever filling you have available, into the picnic kit.

When a halt is made for lunch, bread may be cut by one person, buttered by another, spread with filling by a third, and in the midst of much sociability the sandwiches will be produced as fast as they can be eaten. When sandwiches are thus, as it were, made to order, one stops to think whether another is really wanted or not. When boxes of sandwiches are brought from home the tendency is to keep eating them while they last. Most people eat more bread in this way than usual, and with other starchy food carried because of convenience, the meal becomes unbalanced.

Why not take salad ingredients along, suggests the bureau of home economics? Lettuce and celery, wrapped in damp cloths, tomatoes, and cucumbers can be carried in good condition. Put the mayonnaise in a screw-top jar, and the butter in another. If the day is very warm set them in a box or bucket of chopped ice. People sometimes take an ice cream freezer if there is room in the car. Butter and milk will keep splendidly beside the ice cream can.

You need not have bread sandwiches at all. Split rolls or biscuits answer the same purpose, or unsweetened crackers may be used. By way of dessert, cup cakes and cookies are easier to handle than layer cakes and pies. Figs, prunes, dates, and raisins satisfy the desire for something sweet that may be eaten with the fingers,

while almost any fresh fruits are excellent. Try taking washed strawberries with the hulls on. Use the hulls to hold the berries as they are dipped in powdered sugar and eaten.

If you make a fire in the open you can have toasted frankfurters or bacon or a steak or chops. Fresh-caught fish may be cooked in a skillet over a camp fire, too. Don't forget to take the proper precautions for extinguishing any fires you make. In lieu of building a fire, a hot drink, such as cocoa or coffee, may be taken in a vacuum bottle. Ice-cold milk may be put in these bottles for the children.

If you are likely to have two road side meals, provide something different for each, just as you would at home. A small cooked ham is a good addition to the lunch basket for the second meal, or some American cheese, or hard-boiled eggs, or any canned meats that slice conveniently. Don't forget the can opener, however! Automobiles sometimes develop troubles at awkward spots where no food can be obtained, and it is a comfortable feeling to know that you have the next meal with you whether you need it or not. Extra bread and butter may not be amiss.

The bottle opener, too, must not be left at home. You will surely need grape juice or ginger ale before the day is over. Orange juice and milk are good for the children if the grownups are having coffee. Carry drinking water from home rather than risk drinking from strange springs or wells. Leave one or two drinking cups out of the packed-up lunch kit, with the water, and a box of graham crackers for the children. Driving in the open air is likely to whet their appetites, and a mid-morning cracker with milk, orange juice, or water, may be counted as an extra meal, rather than "picnicking." Sweets, salted nuts, chocolate bars, and other thirst-provoking foods often nibbled at between stops are best omitted.

Your picnic spot will undoubtedly be chosen for its charm and beauty. When the meal is over, pick up all papers and other refuse, and burn or bury them. Leave the woods as you would like to find them.

SERVE SHORTCAKE TO EACH PERSON

Attractive Way Is to Have Individual Cakes.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

An attractive way to serve strawberry shortcake is to have what the Chinese call "each-person" portions. Use your own recipe for biscuit dough, but make it somewhat richer than usual. One-third to one-half cupful of fat to each three cupfuls of flour is a

good proportion. A little sugar may be added if you wish. Cut out rounds rather larger than ordinary biscuits, about three to three and one-half inches in diameter, and roll them thin enough to bake one on top of the other. Brush butter on the under round before setting the upper piece on it, and when they are done the two sections will split apart easily. The oven should be hot (450 degrees Fahrenheit) for individual shortcakes, suggests the bureau of home economics.

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Paint brushes that have become hard from being allowed to dry without being cleaned, may be softened easily and quickly by boiling 15 minutes in "knead."

A fat-baby may be almost as badly fed as one that is too thin. The right food usually makes the babies' flesh firm and creamy pink and neither too fat nor too thin.

Smart Dog

Lassie is a smart dog, indeed, and her mistress has taught her some very clever tricks. For instance, the Mrs. will say: "Lassie, are you a Republican?" Thereupon Lassie will bark quite sharply, indicating that she is really of that political faith.

Late one night the Mr. and Mrs. were awakened by Lassie's loud barking in the kitchen, and the Mrs. finally became uneasy.

"I believe there's some one in the house," she whispered.

"It's only Lassie holding a Republican caucus," granted the Mr. half-asleep.

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Henhouse "Warming"

John Walker of Gray Mills, Maine, has just completed a commodious new henhouse. It is such a nice henhouse, in fact, that Mr. Walker decided it is fit for social affairs—until the hens move in—and so as a sort of dedicatory function he entertained at what in the building. Candies provided the illumination, pine boughs were used as decorations and there were five tables at play.

It doesn't take a very bright woman to dazzle some men.



The Truck Driver

No matter how heavy the load or how hard the going—I can count on my truck pulling through because I use dependable Champions—They're the better spark plug.

Champion is the better spark plug because of its double-ribbed aluminum core—the top-plate construction and its special analysis electrodes.

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CHAMPION Spark Plugs

TOLEDO, OHIO

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To avoid imitations, always look for the signature of *Dr. J. C. Fletcher*. Absolutely Harmless—No Opium. Physicians everywhere recommend it.

You May Have Noticed

"I suppose Easy Street is a happy place." "Now, it runs right into Fifty Avenue."

Into the Cold World

"Is there an opening here for an ambitious young—"

"Yeah, close it as you go out."



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THERE'S PANIC IN Bagville! Cockroaches are dying by the thousands!

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Don't fight roaches with a spray. You must have a powder. Peterman's is the right powder.

It entices roaches from their hiding places. They carry it back on their legs and bodies to their nests behind base-boards, under floors where no spray could possibly reach.

Every adult roach, the young, every egg in the entire colony is exterminated. No odor. Nothing is left but a little dry dust. Use Peterman's.

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