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ATHENA GARAGE

Athena, Oregon





EW YEAR'S eve and all the little town of Ashton astir and alight! Sounds of laugh-ter and good cheer floated out upon the night and everywhere there was evidence of the hearty good will and fellowship that prevalls at

A full moon was lending its charm to the beauty of the night, throwing a soft and silvery radiance on the snow-covered earth. It was one of those nights when Nature seems to almost outdo herself in the lavishness of the beauty that she dispenses.

Ashton had particular cause for happiness this evening. For, in addition to the joy of the New Year holfday, a big celebration was taking place in the town hall to welcome home the town's most distinguished man, War-

One home in particular held a very excited person. Marian York found it hard to keep up a semblance of calm. She was fearful lest the loud peating ings to those around her. Over and over again she told herself that she was foolish, that she meant nothing to Warren Denham, that probably the silly vows they had exchanged in childhood were forgotten by him long

She felt that the wisest plan would be for her to stay away from the celebrations; not to risk the pain of the old longings and desires that the sight of him would be sure to arouse.

But the urge to see him again was too strong, and now she was standing before the mirror, giving a last critical glance at herself before departing for the hall. She had let the rest of the family go on ahead, as she felt that she wanted to go alone.

It was over ten years since she had last seen Warren Denham. During that time lie had gone out into the world and made his name famous, while she remained at home, living the quiet, uneventful life of the little town. He was now a famous engineer, who had brought to a successful completion one of the most difficult engineering feats that had ever been accomplished in western Africa. She had remained a nobody. It was unlikely that he would feel the slightest

interest in her. Once Marian had hopes that things would be different; she had felt that Warren Denham loved her. But he had gone away from the little town without saying a word, had given up their happy comradeship without an apparent regret. And there was little to give her hope in the silence of the ten years that had elapsed since he had gone to Africa. He had written to her occasionally before that time, friendly, interesting letters that might or might not mean anything.

Nine o'clock found the hall packed with a happy, expectant crowd. It was going to be late when the train reached Ashton, and they wanted Warren Denham to see all of the big program that had been planned for him. They felt that the town should be particularly proud of the honor he was paying them in coming so soon after his landing, and were leaving nothing undone to show their gratitude.

A great cheer went up from the erowd when the big moment came and Warren Denham stood before them. The slender, dark-haired men smiled repeatedly as cries of welcome came from every corner of the hall. Then he spoke, quietly and easily, as one of their own might speak to them:

"Friends," he said, " I am very happy to be with you tonight. This is a

moment that I have looked forward to for a long time. During all my wanderings the thought of the day I would come home has been with me. But you have made it even happier than I had anticipated." His voice almost broke for a moment, then he went on:

"It was the thought of your faith and trust in me that often lent me strength-that made me want to do my level best. I owe you far more than you owe me. And I am proud and happy to be back."

It was nearing midnight when the program was over; then the crowd surged up to shake Warren Denham's hand. But Marian York stole quietly away. She felt it was better to do this. More than ever now she seemed to realize the great gulf that lay between her and Warren Denham. She must not allow herself to see him; It would entall too much after-suffering to see the indifference in his eyes.

With quick steps she walked up the deserted street. "Oh, why had he come back, to revive all those memories she had tried so hard to stifle? Life was going to be harder and lonelier for her than ever now! If only he had stayed away!"

Suddenly she woke to the consciousness that she was being followed; footsteps were gaining on her at every moment. Her heart began to pound. There was something about the footsteps that seemed to be famillar. Again she told herself that she was foolish; that it was probably some one who was in a hurry to get

Now, the hurrying one had caught up with her and a voice spoke-a dear and welf-remembered voice out of the



"Why-Why Are You Rushing Away, Marian?"

past: "Why-why are, you rushing away, Marian? I thought you would be one of the first to welcome me."

Confused and stammering, Marian stood before Warren Denham. "1-I thought there were so many others." she said. "I-I dld not think that you would miss me. Things are different

now, Warren." "Not miss you, Marian!" Warren Denham's voice held tenderness and emotion. "Why, Marian, all the things I said in the hall tonight were meant for you. I do love this little town. but-but you are really Ashton to me. I-1 found out as soon as I got to Africa how much you meant to me. But my word was pledged then, and I could not come back. I felt that I must finish the job, and I couldn't ask you to come there. But all the time I kept hoping that you would wait for

"Marian, tell me now if the old promise of our childhood still stands good. Will you marry me?"

As Marian gave him her answer the joyous bells rang out the happy message that another New Year was While the strains of rejoicing were wafted over the snow-covered ways, two hearts sang with joy for the happiness that the New Year had brought them.

(2, 1929, Western Newspaper Union.)

Longest and Shortest Day

There has been some discussion as to which is really the shortest day of the year. It is agreed, however, that the longest day for some folks is the second day in the life of a New Year

New Year Song

Our Old Year goes, and let him gol A New Year comes. We hardly

The change, so peaceful and so slow, And unsought, too; but be it sol

The Old Year hears the rusty leaf, The Old Year carries all the grief; The New Year brings us all relief, And bears the blossom and the sheaf.

Our New Year comes! And let him give Us purer thought by which to live, And greater courage in our strife, And higher purposes in life. -Farm and Fireside.



SS HELEN BROWN turned her back upon her freshman history girls to hide those nistory girls to made which awful surface tears which would show just when one tried to smile and say, "Happy New Year!" Happy New Year! Soon these young things would learn, too, that the newness of a year was-bunk. Nothing was new but Illusion, Life was old

and weary and humdrum. "Brownie's got a grouch!" signaled June Wells who sat in the front row The girls opened their books uneasily. Miss Brown faced them.

"I've decided to give you a test." The girls wriggled in hopeless desperation. Brownle did have a grouch! Just when they had to have school on New Year's day, too!

Writing the questions Miss Brown felt old. Maybe she hadn't a gray hair, maybe she wasn't thirty yet but -again she saw that letter:

"I've thought it over, Helen, and I feel like a cad saying it, but I'm convinced that our engagement was a sad mistake. . .



Her tall, boyish Jim! . . "Our engagement was a mistake!" Her life broken-like that! He who afwnys sald she was too benutiful, too good for him! Probably he'd found some body younger-one girls or-

"What caused the misunderstanding and England?" her chalk wrote viclously.

Those steady gray eyes of Jim's He was her's! "Our engagement a

sad mistake!" The girls were glaring. A test on a day which should have been vacation! Miss Brown went to answer a knock. ". . a mistake, our en gagement. . . ."

Miss Brown stared at the tall figure before her. Quickly she stepped into the hall and closed the door.

"Helen, you darling!" Jim was breathing. "If you only knew! That letter! I thought I'd lost every cent. Couldn't ask you to take me-like that. Lord! What It cost me to write it! But, I haven't and-"

When Miss Brown returned to the room she smiled.

"Let's put away our work, girls," she beamed, "and have a little New Year's program. For the New Year is the time to be happy. Everything. then, is fresh and new and-joyous!" (@, 1929, Western Newspaper Union.)

******* The Thief of Hearts, but He Was Arrested ********

SEATED in the comfortable Ruston living room, with Lois Raston bewitchingly beautiful, and the elder Rostons seeing the Old Year out at the village church, William Field determined to make his great plunge.

"Lois," he breathed, his lips caressing her name, "I have come to beg a New Year's gift. Will you make it?" "All depends," returned the practical young woman. "All depends what you're asking."

"I'm asking your beart, Lois," he blurted, amazed at bis temerity. "Asking your heart, all for myself."

In the firelight her smile seemed kind, but sad. "I'm sorry, Bill," she murmured, "but I can't give you my heart. You see—well—it isn't mine to give. It was stolen weeks ago."

So his misgivings were confirmed. He took the blow, he hoped, manfully. "I'm sorry, Lois," he said, rising. "We will always be friends." One moment their hands met.

He had reached the gate before he was arrested by her voice crying, "Stop thief!"—Robert Stead. (@. 1929, Western Newspaper Union.)

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