

Handmade Rainbows

By Mrs. HARRY PUGH SMITH
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INSTALLMENT FOUR—The Story So Far

The Maguires are giving a dinner for the Newsams. Shirley Maguire and Jaidr Newsam are engaged but Mrs. Newsam would like to see her son marry Connie Mays, daughter of Cov-

CHAPTER V

Mary Etta was already moving into the living room. Laura put her hand on Tom's arm. She did not mean to detain him more than a minute. Mary Etta was suspicious of private conversations between her husband and his mother. She had been determined when she married not to be "mother-in-lawed."

"Isn't business any better, Tom?" asked Laura.

"Better I haven't made enough this week to resole the shoes I've worn out."

"I'm sorry."

"But Mary Etta's raking it in, so I should worry."

Again Laura winced. But she said nothing. Because there was absolutely nothing to say. And Mary Etta was already glancing toward them with narrowed eyes. According to her philosophy, a man's mother made trouble between him and his wife if she could. Mary Etta was exactly like a prickly cactus. Ready to stab at the least excuse. She was determined to have from life exactly what she demanded of it. And yet in spite of her clipped efficiency, Laura had occasionally glimpsed something in Mary Etta's defiant black eyes that resembled panic, absurd as that seemed in connection with her.

She was private secretary to Harvey Cobb Leigh, one of the most powerful cogs in state politics. He was also a contractor in a big way. And he accumulated money with very few scruples about honesty. Mary Etta had gone straight from a business course in high school into his office. She had brains and she could keep her mouth shut. When she married Tom she was already handling most of her employer's private correspondence.

Tom had not wanted her to go on working. Mary Etta had pointed out the folly of doing anything else. She was earning almost as much as Tom in the big real estate agency where he was learning the business. He planned to start for himself eventually. But, as Mary Etta said, he lacked capital. She saw no reason why they should skimp along on next to nothing when she could drag down a monthly salary check. So she didn't resign. And she announced that she did not intend to until Tom's earnings took a decided turp for the better.

Unfortunately they traveled in the opposite direction. The depression knocked the bottom out of the real estate game early. From being on a fairly decent salary, Tom was reduced to a strict commission basis. This during the past year had all but dwindled to a thin mist. There was no longer any question of Mary Etta's resigning her position. For months Tom had been coming to the point where he could contribute nothing to their common expenses while Mary Etta's salary continued to increase. Laura knew the situation was blistering Tom's sensitive male pride.

"Oh, hello, Shirley," murmured Mary Etta as her husband's older sister appeared in the doorway.

Mary Etta did not care for Shirley. She bluntly said that she thought Shirley belonged in the lavender and old lace school. But Kathleen got on better with her sister-in-law. Mary Etta held Kathleen at arm's length as she did all her in-laws. But she did not take it as a personal insult if Tom asked Kathleen to look them up when she was in town. Mary Etta herself never proffered such an invitation. Of course she worked and she and Tom had only a one-room efficiency in an apartment hotel and took most of their meals out. But, as she bluntly explained, it wasn't that. Mary Etta just did not propose to be used as a convenience by her husband's family.

Kathleen, eyeing her brother's wife, wondered as she had before how Tom ever came to fall in love with anyone who made such an art of being thoroughly unpleasant. Privately Kathleen thought Tom was getting fed up. And she didn't blame him. He looked as if he had been on a steady diet of cockleburrs.

"Hello, Kits. Gunning for big game?" he asked with a grin.

Kathleen made a face at him. "It all depends on how you feel toward Mamma Newsam," she said, then squeezed his arm. "Sh! Here they come. My sainted cow, doesn't she look like Mrs. Astor's pet horse?"

The Newsams were just emerging from their handsomely closed car. Jaidr gave his mother his arm. Shirley, looking out the window, felt the little wayward jerk which the sight of him always gave her senses. He was probably in no way extraordinary, but he always seemed so to her. Just Jaidr with his clean-cut profile and steady blue eyes, yet he represented all of heaven and hell to Shirley Maguire.

His mother was mincing along in evening slippers that were a size too small. Her gray chiffon gown was expensive, but she could be depended on to show the effect of any costume by adding a jarring note. In this case it was the huge pink

ington's wealthiest citizen. Mike Maguire is a happy-go-lucky editor and mayor of the town. Kathleen, younger daughter, is furious at Mrs. Newsam's patronizing airs. A stranger had helped camellias on a bosom that was already overshelved.

"How do you do, Laura? How very pretty you look," murmured Mr. Blake Newsam while his wife stiffened.

It was not an auspicious opening as Laura knew. She wished the gentleman would keep his gallantry at home. But Jaidr's father was never one to catch nuances. He beamed on Shirley and from her to Jaidr who had taken Shirley's hand was looking down at her with an expression that for a moment made of her heart a delirious singing bird.

"Handsome couple," murmured Mr. Newsam. "I always said so."

His wife gave him one of those looks meant to drop a husband in his tracks. And Laura nervously flung herself into the breach.

"What a perfectly charming dress, Belle."

"Do you think so?" murmured the lady, slightly mollified.

"Who could help it?" contributed Tom, back-stopping for Laura.

Mrs. Newsam was making like a ship in full sail for the love seat in one corner of the room. It was the most uncomfortable piece of furniture in the house and unless sat in at just the right angle it had a horrifying trick, due to weak underpinning, of closing up under an occupant. It really should have been relegated to the dust heap weeks ago, only there just hadn't been any-

thing to fill up the wall space. So Laura had trusted to luck and pushed it back into the most inaccessible corner. Only of course if there was any weakness in the enemy's armor, Belle Newsam could be trusted to discover it. Laura had a horrible vision of Jaidr's mother being precipitated into the middle of the floor and refusing to trust her weight again to anything in the Maguire house. But Kathleen caught the storm signal and acted.

"Dear Mrs. Newsam," she exclaimed rather breathlessly, "what do you think of the plans for the June fete?"

Quite dexterously she interposed her slim self between the lady and the point of collapse. Mrs. Newsam, delighted to be allowed to tell about the very important committee of which she was a member, permitted herself to be ensconced in a substantial wing chair. And Laura sighed with exquisite relief while Kathleen winked at her over the guest of honor's elaborately marcelled head.

"Shirley," whispered Jaidr in a voice that was not quite steady, "do you remember that you were wearing blue the first night I kissed you?"

Did she remember? Shirley looked down at the soft clinging folds of her blue lace gown. She looked stately and a little aloof. Like a girl in a painting. Very cool and remote. And not quite real. But inside she was a cauldron of seething emotions. Did she remember? Her heart sobbed. It said all sorts of frantic things. But her lips only smiled—very faintly.

"Yes, I remember," said Shirley as if it did not matter.

Jaidr looked white and baffled.

Laura, under the cover of Belle Newsam's tiresome monologue on her own prominent connection with all prominent social functions in Covington, managed to whisper to Kathleen.

"Where on earth do you suppose your father is?"

Kathleen spread her hands helplessly. "Heaven alone knows. Want me to see if he can be located?"

"He's got to be," groaned Laura. "Hulda can't hold dinner forever."

She couldn't see how Alec could do that sort of thing. It was such a pity he had to finish school the year brand new electrical engineers were a drug on the industrial market. Alec was a bundle of nervous energy. He was better suited for anything on earth than idleness. Mike had tried to find him something to do on the newspaper. But Alec hated it. He was created to make things happen, not to write up the exploits of others. With no outlet for his dynamic desire to make the wheels go faster Alec was, or so it seemed to Kathleen, cooking up a merry little hell all his own, aided and abetted by the worldly Mrs. Boone. A wealthy divorcee thirteen years his senior.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"I suppose both of you would go into a decline if I said it isn't all right. Like Ned you would," growled Kathleen. "Do come in and stop cluttering up the door sill."

Mike sniggered. "Don't mind the kitten's claws," he admonished his companion. "She only scratches those she loves. Come up to my room, my boy, while I slick down these old gray locks."

Kathleen stood at the foot of the stairs and glared after them. How on earth was she going to tell Laura that, as usual, Mike had spoiled everything by one of his preposterous gestures in behalf of a perfectly strange man who had no earthly business to have precipitated himself into an already overstrained situation.

CHAPTER VI

As a matter of fact, the crisis resolved itself without fatalities. It was exactly like Mike to sow dragons' teeth and reap love apples. Just as Kathleen was turning back to the living room the telephone rang.

"Kathleen?" Alec was speaking and his voice was a trifle thick, a bit inclined to run up the scale at the end of words. "Tell Mother I can't make it for dinner."

"Alec! How could you?"

"Sure. I'm a rat to do the run-out when she's staging a family shindig. But that's how it is. And you can't do anything about it. So take the air."

"I'm not talking about that. You know what I mean."

"Do I? What of it? You don't need to tattle to Mother, do you?"

"Don't worry. I shan't. She still thinks you are worth getting all hot and bothered about." Kathleen soberly replaced the receiver. She and Alec had fought from the time they were both in rompers. There were less than two years between their ages. To the casual observer they seemed always at the point of mayhem. Actually they were tremendously fond of each other. And Kathleen, although she had no intention of telling Laura so, was heartsick about Alec. He had been drinking. That was why he was not showing up for dinner. That meant he had been somewhere with Myra Boone.

"Darn cradlesnatchers with blonded hair and motheaten morals!" muttered Kathleen under her breath.

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A SELECTED STORY BY A GIFTED AUTHOR

FARM TOPICS

POOR CUTTING RUINS WOODLOT

Carelessness Endangers New Stand, Profits.

By FRED TRENK
(Extension Forester, University of Wisconsin.)

Not all of the wreckage of war is to be found on the other side of the water. Rising log and lumber prices have caused many farmers to "cash-in" with their marketable trees. Regardless of who does the cutting, there are two things any timber owner must bear in mind if he has any hope of ever making a second cut—first, he has to keep all livestock out so that young tree seedlings and sprouts have a chance to grow; and second, the slash, or limbs, tops and waste parts of trees resulting from logging or wind damage must not be allowed to burn in one large, destructive fire.

Woodland owners who fully understand timber values and who can estimate closely the volume of merchantable timber on their land are in a position to realize a larger return through a lump sale of standing timber. However, unless they are fully protected by contract, small trees, so essential to a future stand, are frequently sacrificed in the joggling job.

There are means of selling timber by which the selling price might be increased, and the future productive-ness of the land be protected. This is by having all trees of merchantable size measured for their contents, and to have such trees "blazed" or marked so that a purchaser would know definitely what trees are to be cut and what are to be left. Such a selection might be on the basis of an arbitrary minimum diameter of trees to be cut, or it may provide for the removal of trees based on their present condition, rate of growth and on their effect on other trees growing under or near them.

Select Breeding Hens Before Culling Layers

This is an excellent time to start a poultry breeding improvement program. Dr. W. C. Thompson, professor of poultry husbandry at the New Jersey college of agriculture, Rutgers university, says that such a program should be quite easily established on many farms.

"After the pullets approach maturity, select the superior individuals. Use every bit of information which may be available in this process. Place numbered aluminum leg bands on the best 25 per cent. House the remaining 75 per cent of the oncoming flock in quarters where they can be forced for maximum safe egg yield.

"House the best quarter of the flock separately and keep records on them. Trapping for one year, starting October 1, is highly desirable.

"As trapping records accumulate, apply minimum standards. It is suggested that bands should be removed from individuals which failed to lay 50 or more eggs between October 1 and January 31, or which failed to average 25 eggs a month for March, April and May; or which failed to show a persistent production of at least 50 eggs between June 1 and September 30."

Dirty Cooling System Causes Hot Motors

Does the motor of your tractor overheat? If it does, G. W. McCuen, farm engineer, Ohio State university, suggests checking to see if the fan belt is too loose, if there is an accumulation of dirt on the outside of the cooling fins of the radiator, if the tubes in the radiator are clogged, or if the water jacket of the cylinders is badly laked.

If the tubes of the radiator are partially clogged with slime, McCuen advises this may be cleaned out by filling the cooling system with a caustic solution such as half a can of lye in four to five gallons of water, or one pound of sal soda to four or five gallons of water.

A safe way is to heat the solution and stir it. Then put the solution in the radiator cooling system and thoroughly heat it up by running the motor. This generally takes about 15 minutes, after which the solution may be drained and the cooling system thoroughly flushed out before refilling with water.

Lightning Rods

Lightning rods have an efficiency of 97 per cent if properly constructed and installed.

Inspection of rodded buildings which have been struck by lightning generally uncover one or more of several defects, the Board states. These include lack of grounding to permanent moisture, insufficient number of points, particularly at chimneys, cupolas, gables and other elevations; points and connections not electrically secure.



THE PAPERS OF PRIVATE PURKEY

Dear Ma— Well, I guess maybe I will be tossed into the guard house again or shot or put peeling more potatoes (and I don't know which is worse). I got one of them post cards from the Sen. Wheeler First Committee and what I read in the newspapers about all the fuss being made about it makes me awful nervous. Only some good luck will save me. I wrote a note to the President like the Senator asked me to saying I was against getting into the European war. (I did not say positively though.) And I explained while I was against it I would go peacefully if ordered.



But even this was wrong and only a letter I just got from Nellie Petersen keeps me from a nervous breakdown. It seems I wrote a letter to Nellie the same time I wrote to Washington, and by mistake I put the letter about not getting into the war in Nellie's envelope and sent to Mr. Roosevelt the letter I meant for Nellie.

This wood seem a good break I guess but I am not two sure becuz how will the President know? The letter he got just began "My Darling Nellie" and what will he think of a private calling his superior a name like that? In the very first sentence of the letter which he has it says "Remember all your promises to me my dear," and what is to keep him from thinking I am talking about the very promises mentioned on that Wheeler post card? He will not know I am just talking about the promises Nellie Petersen made to me about not dancing with Sergeant Mooney no more and about marrying me if I ever get through kitchen police duties.

I think that the letter which I sent to President Roosevelt by mistake also says I am holding him to every promise he made last year with means Nellie's promises about always being true to me and not the President's campaign promises but he will not know this I am afraid. I think I closed this letter with a line like "I am very serious about this, honey bunch, and if you go back on your word and try to two-time me in any way I will take no nonsense." You can see what a fix I am in, ma. Every time I see an officer coming my way I think General Marshall has sent for me.

I am in bad with Nellie two on account of she does not know what to make of the letter which she got from me and which was meant for the President. She says that I am a louse for ever writing it in the first place. Every time I have seen Nellie I have told her I was every inch a fighting man and that war held no terrors for me, no matter whether it was on home grounds or where, so I look pretty foolish to her writing a letter to the President that I am against any war that takes me far away from home.

Come what may, ma, I am in a tough spot and I feel two worried to write more now except to close saying I love you like always. Your loving son, Oscar.

Ima Dodo wants to do her part in the "V" campaign, so she is wearing a V-neck sweater.

TWEET! TWEET! The St. George hotel at Bermuda is now occupied by the U. S. engineers corps, the picturesque Inverurie is occupied by the British contraband control, the Bermudian and Princess have been taken over by the censorship bureau and the Elbow Beach hotel will soon be occupied by U. S. navy officials. A good regulation honeymoon in that country seems pretty difficult just now.

THE HONEYMOON IS OVER The two lovebirds Are having words; No more you see 'em kissing; She tried to cook Meals from a book . . . And Page 14 was missing! —Merrill Chilcote.

LUCK Luck and pluck go hand in hand, Pluck is Luck's big brother; Luck will never come along Unless you bring the other. —Gordon R. Higham.

Simile by R. Roelofs Jr.:—As patient as a chairman of a chess tournament.

Jumpy Julia, the most nervous guest at Ye Seaside Inn, hopes the gasoline economy drive begins with the outboard motor fanatics.

Two-Thirds Loaf "How many people work in the government office?" "About one-third of them."



"Maude looks good enough to eat." "Be careful! They say she employs artificial coloring matter."

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