

Handmade Rainbows

By Mrs. Harry Pugh Smith
© Mc CLURE W.N.U. Service

INSTALLMENT TWELVE—The Story So Far

This is the story of an American family in depression years. Laura Maguire, wife of Mike Maguire, happy-go-lucky editor and mayor of Covington, is mother of four children:

Tom, whose real estate job in the big city near Covington is shot and who separates from his wife, Mary Eta, secretary to a big shot, when she refuses to give up her job to return to Covington with him.
Alec, who, unable to get a job, runs

CHAPTER XVII

Alec Maguire gravely balanced himself on one foot like a stork and squinted along the bottle of gin as if it were a shotgun.

"Ready, fire!" he said with vast solemnity and killed the bottle dead. Myra laughed herself into hysterical giggles. "You're so comical," she said.

Alec surveyed her with bloodshot eyes that would not quite focus. "That's right. I am. Comical as hell. When I'm liquored up. Guess I'd better stay that way."

They were seated in one of the alcoves which lined the large dining room at the Porterville Swimming Pool. They had been sitting there since four that afternoon. According to the original plan they had intended to start back home when they had their swim. Only Myra had dared them to go somewhere else where they could dine and dance.

To do Alec justice he had meant to go home for dinner. But he felt unusually low that day. The only relief was to get so cockeyed he could laugh and laugh.

Natalie, who so far had been more sleepy than convivial, suddenly giggled. The mechanical orchestra at the other end of the big pavilion was playing an old record, "Shuffle Off to Buffalo."

"Why don't you two stop fooling and pull a real one?" she suggested. The others stared at her. "I mean elope. Get married. I mean middle-aisle it. Or what have you?"

Alec stared. Marry Myra Boone! For a moment he was jolted back to himself and saw the woman beside him with painful distinctness—the coarse blowsy face, the weak self-indulgent mouth, the metallic yellow hair which was drab at the roots. Everything within him revolted. Marry a woman like that! Take her home to Laura as his wife? He'd rather die.

"I said you weren't game," murmured Myra.

Alec drained his glass. "I'll call your bluff, Myra. Let's go."

Her nostrils dilated. "No kidding?"

The drive back to Covington did nothing to clear Alec's confused brain. Myra put the gas throttle down to the floor board and the speedometer touched eighty more than once.

They had just entered the suburbs of Covington, still at a maniacal speed. Each of them at the same moment saw the big fire engine careening toward them down the middle of the street. Myra was a true neurotic. She covered her face with her hands and shrieked. It was Alec who reached over and gave the steering wheel a tremendous jerk. It threw them into the opposite curb to the detriment of fenders and running board. But at least they did not meet the fire engine head on.

"And was that a near thing?" laughed Alec.

The others, still weak from shock, huddled in their seats and said nothing.

"Where's the fire?" Alec asked of a man running down the street.

"Over on Kirby Street."

Kirby Street! Mike had always said those ramshackle buildings down that way were nothing but fire traps. He had begged the City Council for years to condemn them before they went up like waste paper in a bonfire, taking their dreadful toll of innocent lives. Alec's brow was wet with sweat.

"Sit down and let's get going," muttered Myra irritably. "We've a little private matter to attend to." She meshed gears, and the big car shivered away from the curb and began laboriously to pick up speed.

Alec had, however, already snatched open the door and leaped out. By the time she had brought the big machine to a halt which burned the tires, Alec had picked himself up and disappeared toward that ominous coppery glow across the tracks.

He knew before he was within two blocks that his hunch had been right. The conflagration undoubtedly centered in that section of Kirby Street where Pete Knight had a dingy flat. Alec began to run faster. Covington had a naive idea of adequate police protection. Usually there was little need for anything elaborate in that line. But in emergencies things were likely to get beyond the venerable chief and his two men. They were doing all they could to hold the crowd back from the danger zone. But that amounted to little. Alec, already feeling the heat of the blaze on his face, slipped under the ropes. The whole row of dilapidated frame buildings was a strut of licking, crackling flames. Alec's heart turned over. Quite suddenly he saw Lou. She was standing in a little knot of weeping women and children. All of them hugged small possessions which they had rescued

around with a flashy divorcee, older than he, and who, on a bet, dates Lou Knight, daughter of the town souse.

Shirley, engaged to Laird Newsom for three years, but whose marriage is deferred because Laird too is out of work, his father having closed his factory to cut down losses. Ma Newsom wants Laird to marry Connie Mays, the banker's daughter.

Kathleen, society editor on her father's paper, in whom a newcomer,

from the fire, Lou clasped the straggle of red geranium in its forlorn tunic to her breast. Like the rest of the women she stared as if fascinated into the roaring red flames. Tears ran slowly down her cheeks. Lou seemed dazed by the completeness of the disaster.

"Lou," said Alec huskily. She turned slowly and stared at him. Her eyes were a little blank and they returned at once to their fascinated study of the crackling, leaping flames which were feeding greedily from roof to ground on flimsy buildings. Alec looked around for her father. He thought it likely the old sot was dead to the world somewhere in a gutter. Pete had failed Lou on every other occasion. It was too much to expect him not to now. But Alec discovered Pete Knight almost at once just out of range of the flying sparks. A tragic yet ludicrous figure, as usual. Reeling a little as his bleary eyes stared into the inferno before him. Once he attempted in a clumsy way to aid with the fire hose but he succeeded only in drenching himself. People laughed hysterically. Even at that grim moment shambling Pete Knight furnished the comic relief.

"I don't know what we're going to do," whispered Lou suddenly. "Everything's gone except what we've got on our backs."

"Gee, Lou, I'm sorry—" he began, but paused abruptly.

A tremendous shout went up from the crowd swelled by the walls of

"I guess to everybody else," she said in a low strained voice, "he was just a drunken bum. But he never looked like that to me. And he was all I had."

Alec's eyes stung. "At least he died magnificently, Lou."

Her chin lifted a little. "He wasn't ever really bad. My mother was killed. In an automobile accident. He was driving. And he adored her. He never got over it. Every time he sobered up he heard her screaming."

Alec shivered. "He'll not suffer any more, Lou."

She drew a long quivering breath. "Where are we going?" she asked suddenly.

"I'm taking you to Mother for the night," he said gruffly.

It had come like a flare from a shell over no-man's land, that inspiration.

"Maybe she won't want me," said Lou. She flushed. "I'm just a sug-in, you know."

Alec winced again. Laura was a grand sport, but even she might wonder at her son appearing on the threshold with a girl he was not even supposed to know.

"This is Lou Knight, Mother. She lived on Kirby Street and got burned out tonight. And her father—"

"Yes, I know," said Laura quickly. "Mike just telephoned me."

She had been sitting in the living room alone ever since Mike had rushed off to be of service if possible or at least in the middle of things. Her eyes traveled slowly from the girl's drooping figure, the run-down heels and nervous twisting hands, to Alec's haggard face.

"You see, Mother," said Alec. "I've been taking Lou places. But she hasn't anywhere to go now. So I brought her home."

Laura's heart beat thickly against her side. She could not move her tongue for a moment. Alec and this cheap little girl! Alec had been going around with drunken Pete Knight's daughter. Laura wondered if all mothers felt frantic at times.

"I like her a lot, Mother," said her son in a queer quiver voice.

Lou's hand jerked violently in his and her little wistful face flooded with burning color. Alec gave her a glance that cut the heart out from under Laura.

"It's all right," she said. But it wasn't. It was the bitterest dose she had ever swallowed.

Shirley and Laird went to the fire in Connie Mays' car, accompanied of course by that piece of excess baggage, Lance Ferguson. Connie was a glutton for excitement. She never missed anything of that nature if she got wind of it. She was a thin, too-vivacious girl whose nerves crackled from overstimulation. The destroying flames aroused in her only a fierce exultation. That hundreds of distressed people were being burned out of their homes did not impress her. She clung to Laird's arm and laughed hysterically as the block of ramshackle buildings, gutted by the blaze, collapsed upon itself.

"What a show!" she cried. Shirley shivered. In that moment she hated Connie Mays. With a wild savage hatred that frightened her.

Lou hid her eyes against Alec's breast. He held her tightly in an agony of pity. There was a gasp, a tremendous cheer. People surged forward. Pete Knight stood at the window of the flat. He had Joey in his arms. A limp, unconscious Joey! Awkwardly but gently Pete Knight, still swaying on his feet, tossed the child out. The web caught the thin little body. Again a sigh rose from tightened throats.

"Jump, man! Save yourself!"

"Father!" screamed Lou.

"Jump, man! Save yourself!" "Father!" screamed Lou.

"Jump, man! Save yourself!" "Father!" screamed Lou.

"Jump, man! Save yourself!" "Father!" screamed Lou.

"Jump, man! Save yourself!" "Father!" screamed Lou.

"Jump, man! Save yourself!" "Father!" screamed Lou.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Star Dust

STAGE SCREEN RADIO
By VIRGINIA VALE
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

WENDY BARRIE and George Sanders were sort of rocked back on their heels recently on the set of RKO's "A Date With the Falcon." They were introduced to Michele Morgan, the French actress who makes her screen debut here in "Joan of Paris," and promptly acknowledged the introduction in fluent French. Then they went on from there. But Miss Morgan shut up like a clam; not even a "Oui, oui" did she utter. Finally, when they'd about decided that their French was all wrong, she explained that she was trying so hard to be completely American that she wasn't even thinking in French!

John Boles is returning to the screen in Monogram's "Boy o' Mine." Remember John? He used to be one of the screen's most popular singing stars. He's been doing concert tours and sort of resting on his laurels, during his vacation from the screen.

Robert Preston, who recently was chosen by vote of the nation's exhibitors as one of the top leading men in pictures (and that's the kind of selection that counts in Hollywood!) has been named by Para-



ROBERT PRESTON

mount as the third member of the co-starring triumvirate of "This Gun for Hire." The other two stars are Veronica Lake—and we're told that she'll change her hair-do—and Alan Ladd. Ladd is a young character actor, of whom not much has been heard as yet; he won the role with a remarkable screen test.

Movie-goers will get their first glimpse of the technique of the underground revolt against Hitler, now spreading through Europe, in the newest March of Time film, "Norway in Revolt"; it also includes scenes of combined Norwegian and British naval raids on the coast of Norway, which resulted in the destruction of valuable Nazi war supplies.

Bette Davis is "The Most Regular Star" on the Warner Bros. lot, according to a poll conducted by the studio's 72 police officers. The honor was awarded because of her thoughtfulness, cheerfulness and her being, in general, "a regular guy."

Those who have forgotten that Bob Hope started his theatrical career as one-half of the hoofing team of Hope and Byrnes are going to be surprised when they see his song-and-dance version of the Irving Berlin number, "You Can't Brush Me Off" in Paramount's "Louisiana Purchase." He does a dance routine with a colored kid band and quartet that should make Rochester look to his laurels.

Did you know that Mickey Mouse was 13 years old the other day? Walt Disney named him Mortimer Mouse, but Mrs. Disney suggested the change to Mickey. He made his debut in the cartoon comedy, "Steamboat Willie," and was an instant success.

Everyone who enjoyed those radio presentations of outstanding pictures is delighted now that the Playhouse is back on the air. Dramatized versions of successful pictures are heard Monday through Friday in quarter-hour episodes. The cast is headed by Virginia Field, and includes Donald Briggs, who has appeared in many of the Dr. Kildare and Andy Hardy pictures.

ODDS AND ENDS—When she was in New York recently Joan Fontaine drove interviewers slightly mad by insisting on discussing fishing trips instead of fashions and pictures. . . Joe E. Brown has recovered from injuries sustained in that automobile accident and has checked in at Columbia for "Cowboy Joe" . . . Rita Hayworth is coming right along; she gets Franchot Tone as her leading man in "Eddie Was a Lady" . . . And Alexis Smith is doing all right too; Warner Bros. gave her a new contract and plans to star her in "Blonde Bomber" . . . Barney Google and Snuffy Smith of the comics will step into a series of Monogram pictures.

FARM TOPICS

SWEET POTATO HARVEST TIME

Growers Cheat 'Jack Frost' By Digging Quickly.

By LEWIS F. WATSON
(Extension Horticulturist, N. C. State College.)

Shortening days and cooler nights herald the arrival of fall and harvest time for sweet potatoes, one staple in the diet of many farm people.

Potatoes keep best when they are allowed to mature before harvesting and before frost kills the vines. If the vines are killed by frost, they should be removed immediately and the potatoes dug soon.

Use a vine cutter, attached to the beam of the plow, when vines are not removed before harvest. This attachment should be constructed so as to prevent the blade which cuts the vine from going deep enough to injure the potato.

One of the most important rules at harvest time is not to bruise the potatoes. They should not be thrown from one row to another. Three rows can easily be placed together without throwing the potatoes. Bruised yams rot easily in storage, and dark spots caused by rough handling lower the market value of the crop.

As the potatoes are removed from the soil and piled in the heap row, they should be graded carefully. All cut or broken yams should be piled separately from the No. 1s and fed to stock as soon as possible.

For curing and storing a regular storage crate has many advantages over the bushel tub. Besides conserving room, the crate allows a better circulation of air.

Potatoes should be stored and cured in a thoroughly cleaned and dry house immediately after harvesting. Proper temperature and moisture conditions are essential factors in keeping the crop.

AGRICULTURE IN INDUSTRY

By Florence C. Weed

(This is one of a series of articles showing how farm products are finding an important market in industry.)

CASTOR BEANS

To make American industry less dependent upon foreign products, castor bean growing is being revived to supply a fast-drying oil for paints and enamels. It is found to be a good substitute for tung oil, a product of China which has been extensively used in the paint industry. Since the Japanese invasion, this foreign oil is both costly and difficult to get and the domestic supply is not being produced in large quantities.

Castor bean growing is not new to this country for it thrived in a half dozen states around 1850 when 23 oil mills were operating, most of them located around St. Louis. After the Civil war, production increased until Kansas glutted the market with a boom crop of 766,143 bushels in 1879. Prices fell and interest in the castor bean declined.

Last year test plots were grown in 33 states from coast to coast, in the South and as far north as New York. New seed was imported from Java, Brazil and India by the National Farm Chemurgic Council in an effort to find a new market for the farmer. It included shatter-resistant varieties which do not require a prohibitive amount of hand labor, since they are less likely to eject their seeds as they start to ripen, and can be harvested in two or three operations.

One of the first commercial uses of castor oil is in lacquer for lining cans, in which food is preserved. By treating it with sulphuric acid, an oil is obtained which is used for softening textiles. It is also used in the manufacture of soap, aniline inks, and non-brittle tire cement.

Farm Notes

Milk cows on farms in the U. S. increased nearly three per cent between 1940 and 1941.

One hen normally will eat about 80 pounds of feed a year, of which approximately one-half should be mash and one-half grain, in order to obtain best results.

An inexpensive and efficient homogenizing machine for small dairies, operated by a quarter-horse-power motor and weighing only 137 pounds, is now on the market.

The 1941 United States lamb crop probably is the largest on record.

The 1941 U. S. hay crop of 96,000,000 tons is expected to be the largest harvested since 1927 and the third largest produced in the last 30 years.

July 1 estimates on corn in the United States indicate a harvest of 2,548,700,000 bushels, which will be 4 per cent more than the 1940 crop and 10 per cent above the average crop in the period 1930-39.

AROUND THE HOUSE

When baking candied sweet potatoes turn them frequently to permit even browning.

To remove fresh fruit stains from table linen, stretch the stained part over a bowl and pour boiling water over it.

A damp cloth placed around a head of lettuce will keep it fresh and crisp.

A coat of furniture polish on interior window sills makes their cleaning easier.

If the beaten eggs are mixed with milk that is slightly warm when making custards the custard will not be watery.

Meats cooked at low temperatures not only save fuel, but they are not overcooked, and for that reason are tender and juicy.

Canned foods that spoil should be buried with one tablespoonful of lye to each quart to keep animals away from it.

HE FOUND A BETTER WAY



BETTER VISION THROUGH EYE GLASSES WAS DISCOVERED BY SALVINO D'ARMATO AROUND 1275.

In Doubtful Joy "Tis safer to be that which we destroy than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy."—Macbeth.

RELIEVE MISERY OF COLDS QUICKLY USE 666 LIQUID TABLETS, SALINE NOSE DROPS, COUGH DROPS

Plains Told An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.

RELIEVES MONTHLY FEMALE PAIN

Women who suffer pain of irregular periods with crampy nervousness—due to monthly functional disturbances—should find Lydia E. Pinkham's Compound Tablets (with added iron) simply marvellous to relieve such distress. They're made especially for women. Taken regularly—Lydia Pinkham's Compound Tablets help build up resistance against such annoying symptoms. They also help build up red blood and thus aid in promoting more strength. Follow label directions. Lydia Pinkham's Compound Tablets are WORTH TRYING!

We Can All Be EXPERT BUYERS

In bringing us buying information, as to prices that are being asked for what we intend to buy, and as to the quality we can expect, the advertising columns of this newspaper perform a worth while service which saves us many dollars a year.

It is a good habit to form, the habit of consulting the advertisements every time we make a purchase, though we have already decided just what we want and where we are going to buy it. It gives us the most priceless feeling in the world; the feeling of being adequately prepared.

When we go into a store, prepared beforehand with knowledge of what is offered and at what price, we go as an expert buyer, filled with self-confidence. It is a pleasant feeling to have, the feeling of adequacy. Most of the unhappiness in the world can be traced to a lack of this feeling. Thus advertising shows another of its manifold facets—shows itself as an aid toward making all our business relationships more secure and pleasant.

\$