

The JOY of LIVING

By SIDNEY GOWING

Illustrations by Ellsworth Young

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The chauffeur, who was a middle-aged man with a singularly wooden expression, seemed to be making a mental effort. He saluted, staring straight before him.

"Goodby, Georgina! Bless you, my child; bless you! Drive on, Grundle. What are you waiting for?"

The car meandered out of Scroope park and turned northward along the main road. Georgina was in low spirits. Almee throughout had been seething with an enormously increased sense of mutiny, and as they neared the station, she exploded.

"I can't stand it, Georgie!"

"I wish I were you!" said Georgina mournfully.

"Huh?"

"I wish I were Almee Scroope, and on my way to Jervaux abbey. That's all."

Almee started slightly. An extraordinary impulse came into her eyes. Georgina, who knew the sign of old, looked at her nervously.

"You are!" said Almee, in a voice of unlooked-for decision.

"What on earth do you mean?"

Almee gripped her by the arm, and replied, in a low voice that bubbled with excitement.

"My dear, fat cousin, your full name, as I remember, is Georgina Amy Scroope Berners! Lop off the superfluous head and tail, and there you are—Amy Scroope. Near enough for anyone. You are going to Jervaux instead of me! Aunt Erythea has never seen me, nor has Alexander Lambé. And neither of them know you from Adam—I mean Eve! You'll suit them down to the ground!"

Georgina looked at her with dawning terror.

"It is a gorgeous arrangement!" exclaimed Almee, tightening her grip on her cousin's arm. "And nothing easier. Uncle Joseph will never miss you—leave me to fix that up. Grundle will deliver you at Jervaux; he's a perfect superstitious, and has probably forgotten which of us is to go there, if we didn't tell him. He never talks, either. As for me, I shall go to Scarborough, or on a walking tour—or anything I choose!"

"Almee, are you mad?"

"It is one of the saddest moments of my life," retorted Almee; and, leaning over the back, she tore the tag-labels off her luggage and Georgina's, and scattered them on the road. "You can take my things with you!"

"If you think for a moment I'd have anything to do with such a business—"

A fiendish expression came over Almee's features. She gripped her cousin's arms again.

"If you don't," she hissed, "I'll tell everybody about you and Aloysius Bienerhasset getting lost at the rural-decennial picnic!"

At this monstrous accusation, Georgina blushed scarlet. The mildest peccadillo in a blameless life, the memory of the incident in question always filled her with alarm; Almee had held it over her head before.

"I won't listen to another word!" she gasped.

"You needn't. It is the time for deeds!" Almee seized a small square box from among the luggage and thumped the chauffeur on the back.

"Grundle, stop here! I have only a bag, I'll walk up to the station approach. Take Miss Berners on to Jervaux. And hurry—she is behind time already!"

A faintly bewildered expression passed over the chauffeur's face, as though he were trying to arrange his ideas. He rubbed his ear for a moment, then saluted and let in the clutch.

Georgina, who had risen with the intention of escaping from the car, lost her balance and collapsed in a slightly undignified manner on the seat.

She struggled up and turned a flushed face towards her cousin.

"Stop! Stop!" she cried, in an agitated voice. "Almee—"

"Good-by, dear!" said Almee, waving her handkerchief. "Don't get lost with Alexander!"

The car bore the speechless and gasping Georgina out of sight round the bend. Almee sat down on her box, buried her face in her hands, and dissolved into such unfeeling laughter that a pair of thrushes and a chaffinch fled from the hedge in indignation and alarm.

Onward through the green lanes and over the county border the car carried a blup and nerveless Georgina. Consternation had given way to numb despair.

"What shall I do?" she thought.

"What am I to say to Lady Erythea? There'll be a fearful row!"

Georgina racked her brains for a way out of the difficulty. There seemed to be none. She lay back ex-

hausted. And so perverse is even the breeze, a noise that attuned itself curiously to Almee's thoughts. It was like the buzz of a humming bee. She looked up, and saw a motorcycle speeding along the road with a smear of following dust behind it like the tail of a comet. Almee recognized the Flying Sphinx, and became aware of a laughing face looking up at hers, and a set of very white teeth.

"Why, it's Billy!" she cried spontaneously.

"Hello, old chap!" cried the cyclist.

Billy was bare-headed, his fair hair sticking up at the crown in a little tuft that blew about in the wind.

"Where were you making for?" he asked.

"The unemployment bureau!" retorted Almee flippantly.

Billy's face expressed concern.

"I suppose you're giving me. You don't mean you've lost your job?"

"Job?" Almee bubbled with amusement. "Well, I had a job all ready for me this morning. But it's washed out. I've lost it. And now I'm adrift."

Billy was perplexed. He had been wholly unable to place Almee. He wondered if she were a governess. A question was on his lips, but he checked himself for fear of giving offense.

"Lost it?" he exclaimed. "I guess it's just as well! You look a heap happier! What job'd you think of chasin'?"

"I—I don't know."

Billy looked at her eagerly. A sudden flush came into his eyes, as one who conceives a superb idea.

"Say! Let me find you one! I've a brain-wave!"

"What do you mean?"

"Go shares with me!"

"Shares?" echoed Almee. She was conscious of a curious little thrill.

"Share what?"

"See here!" said Billy, eyeing her keenly. "When we were doing fifty-five on the Sphinx, you never willed—never turned a hair!"

"Of course not. It was gorgeous." He came nearer, intensely earnest.

"Know anything about motor engines?" he said quickly.

"I've often taken down the old bus at home, on a wet day, and reassembled it."

"Where was that?"

"At the place where I had a job," said Almee.

"Great!" he cried. "You're the thing I've been looking for all these months. Now, listen to the brain-wave. I'm over here to sell the Sphinx. There's a big deal on in London. But what I want's a quiet spot where I can develop some of the gadgets with no crooks around to steal 'em. Get me?"

"Yes, go on," said Almee, catching his enthusiasm.

"I'm heading now for a little town called Stanhoe, thirty miles south of here. Stanhoe's quiet as the tomb. I've struck it before. There's an old mill I believe I can get hold of, and fit up as a garage and workshop—"

"Yes, I see!" said Almee eagerly.

"Come on into it with me—come to Stanhoe!" said Billy explosively.

"You'll catch on to the Flying Sphinx in a minute, an' then popularize her as a lady's mount! The finest mount for a girl ever put on the market. There ain't one yet. You can do it! I'll teach you to tend an' drive her. Will you come?"

"Will a duck swim?" cried Almee.

"Of course I'll come!"

"Fine!—partner!" cried Billy, flinging out a big brown hand.

Almee took it, and received a shake that bruised her fingers.

"Take your perch, old chap!" said Billy, straddling the Sphinx. "Off for Stanhoe!"

They whirred down the long slope with the westerling sun broad on their right above the fir-trees. It was a roughish ride on the carrier. There was no pillow-seat; Billy was evidently not accustomed to carry passengers.

"Say," said Billy, over his shoulder, "I didn't catch your name, did I?"

"Almee—Snooks," replied the passenger on the spur of the moment, as well as she could for the wind whistling in her teeth.

"Snooks!"

Almee laughed. It was very like Scroope, and quiet as music.

"Near enough!" she gasped. "But 'old chap' will do. Is that American?"

"American? Gee, no! It's the only English I know. Let it go at that—Amy is too feminine for a partnership. And now we'll let her out. This," said Billy joyously, as he opened the throttle wide, "is what the doctor ordered!"

The Flying Sphinx, freighted with the partners, roared down the hill and devoured the miles to Stanhoe.

(To be continued)

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Mangels and roots may be used to good advantage as green feed for the laying flock. It may be necessary to educate the birds into eating them. It is important not to run short of green feed.—O. A. C. Experiment station.



Georgina Faltered.

CHAPTER III

Re-Enter Billy.

Almee trumped along the broad highway, whistling. At Scroope, much more at Jervaux, one was not allowed to whistle. Ever and anon she stopped whistling to laugh.

Almee had dropped the square box into a quarry pit an hour before and continued on her way unburdened. The idea of finding lodgings at Scarborough appealed to her. She had funds enough. A month's pocket money was in her purse, and Lady Scroope had been liberal on her departure.

"What a row there'll be," chuckled Almee. "If Georgie doesn't play up! I don't care. I gave them my ultimatum. They can't hang me. I've been very patient with them all. One must make a stand sometime or other. Who does my life belong to," demanded Almee, never a purist in grammar. "If not to me?"

Chopped alfalfa or clover-soaked in warm water may be used as a substitute for the more succulent green feeds for poultry. Nothing else will throw the pullets off production quite so quickly as the absence of green feed.—O. A. C. Experiment station.

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