

# Sylvia of the Minute

By  
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## STORY FROM THE START

Handsome, fastidious and wealthy—young St. Croix Creighton awaits his sweetheart at their trysting place. She is fifteen minutes late, this ordinary little Pennsylvania Dutch girl, Meely Schwenckton, but he awaits her eagerly. She is so demurely beautiful, he thinks, but so out of his "class." Despite her seeming innocence and ignorance, she succeeds in keeping him at a distance, to his chagrin.

## CHAPTER II

Meely Schwenckton, hurrying back breathlessly through the October twilight to the farm house, lest the autocratic head of the house get in from the fields ahead of her and become suspicious of her goings-on, seemed to have undergone a transformation since she had left her lover. Not only had she managed, on the way home, to shed her cheap, gaudy frock of blue voile for a trim tailored suit, but also that veil of bovine dullness which her pretty face had worn had been replaced by a soft, bright amusement; her timid bearing, so abjectly expressing a sense of inferiority, was changed to a look of suppressed excitement, an air of intense vitality, which made her recent humility unimaginable.

Reaching the kitchen porch of the farm house, she was brought up short as her hand touched the latch of the door, by the sound of a whining nasal voice within, reproaching and threatening to the accompaniment of a child's crying.

Meely's hand dropped from the latch and she stood listening, a look in her eyes of mingled distress and disgust.

"When your Pop hears how you done me dirt this after," whined the nasal voice, "oh, but you'll get the good whippin', Lizzie Schwenckton! Oncet I tell him how you run out after school and let me with all the work, meebly you won't ketch it with that there switch he keeps handy! Lettin' me alone here with all the diapers and all the cleanin' and cookin' and his sick wife and baby to tend! Well!—of!—all!—things! Yes, if he don't give you the worst switchin' you ever had, then I don't know the man!"

"Ach, Aunt Rosy, don't tell him!" the child's voice began in gasping sobs. "I'll help you now—I'll do this here whole tub full of washin'—and I'll wash all the supper dishes for you—you can just set and rest yourself!"

"Well, I guess anyhow you'll wash the supper dishes after the smart switchin' you're gettin'! That'll make you spy for a couple days, I guess, if my talkin' at you don't! You needn't to beg me—"

The nasal whine stopped short as the speaker became aware of a third person in the room, though she had not heard the opening of the door. There stood Meely, her back against the kitchen door, looking at Aunt Rosy with those bright, clear eyes of hers that somehow always cowed the woman, giving her, unreasonably, a sense of guilt which she resented. Always she was resolving that she would not let herself be "downed" by this "high-minded hussy" who had no rights in this house anyway.

"I'll show her who's got rights here!" she daily determined.

Yet she found herself just now, as always when confronted by the silent criticism of this girl's confusing regard, trying apologetically to justify herself.

"Mind you what Lizzie done yet! I give her the diapers to wash after school and she run out to play and let 'em. And me with all the cleanin' and the supper to get and my sick sister's broth to make and all—my lands! How kin I get through all when Lizzie runs out after school and won't help!"

The big, warm, cozy kitchen which, like most farm kitchens of Pennsylvania, was also the family living room, was covered by a bright rag carpet and furnished with a roomy settee against the wall, several big, painted rocking-chairs, a large decorated calendar labeled "Sweet Sausage" hanging from a cuckoo clock, a table spread for supper, a cooking stove on which sausage and potatoes were sizzling.

The Schwenckton family, as well as the neighboring farm families, had seen this kitchen become transformed in three weeks, under the temporary reign of Aunt Rosy during the confinement of Schwenckton's young wife, from a spotless cleanliness to a messy untidiness and disorder which, in the eyes of the immaculate Pennsylvania Dutch housekeepers, was a scandal next only to immorality and more unheard of. Aunt Rosy's incompetent housekeeping, combined with her autocratic and unamiable attitude towards her sister's stepchildren (from which there was no escape nor appeal, since it was backed up by the Head of the

House) had driven the elder son and daughter to rebel and run away; Nettie, the fifteen-year-old girl, having found refuge in the home of her grandmother and Jakey, seventeen years old, having disappeared entirely—to the genuine distress as well as inconvenience of their father to whom Jakey especially had been a great help on the farm. But the other two, Lizzie and Sammy, were too young to escape.

The one soft spot about Aunt Rosy, apparently, was her devotion to her young sister, Susie. Mr. Schwenckton's girl wife, whom she had "raised" from a baby. But although she idolized Susie, she completely dominated her. In all things Susie followed her elder sister's advice and judgment and obeyed her, when she was with her, as much now as when, before her marriage, she had lived in Rosy's home. Susie was the only person in the world who did not find Rosy repulsive.

Ten-year-old Lizzie, a thin, delicate-looking child, was working frantically at a wash-tub at the far end of the cluttered, dirty kitchen, crying hysterically while she worked, terrified of the punishment hanging over her.

Meely, going across the room to hang her jacket on a rack on the wall, spoke over her shoulder in reply to Aunt Rosy's complaints, her pleasant tone and manner betraying none of the loathing she felt towards the woman. "But since you didn't do the cleanin', Aunt Rosy (look at this kitchen!) nor the diapers, and kept Sammy home from school to wait on Susie, what have you done all day? And Mr. Schwenckton won't like it, you know, that you're having the diapers washed here in the kitchen where we have to eat—"

It is to be noted that Meely's accent and diction were not now so sturdily Pennsylvania Dutch as when she had talked with St. Croix Creighton a half hour ago. The hint of foreignness in her speech was not that of the Pennsylvania Dutch at all.

A heavy step on the porch at this instant was followed by the opening of the kitchen door and the entrance of the farmer in overalls.

Lizzie's crying was instantly choked back while she bent to her work more frantically than ever; and Aunt Rosy acquired suddenly a great air of industry about the stove and table.

Mr. Schwenckton, closing the door behind him, stood surveying with disgust the disorder and dirt of the kitchen.

A big, red-faced man of mild, though obstinate, countenance, he looked so good-natured that one might have wondered why his children were so afraid of him. But family discipline among the Pennsylvania Dutch is a religion; "spare the rod and spoil the child," a dogma. Mr. Schwenckton had ever tried to perform his whole duty by the children God had given him to rear for His honor and glory in a heavenly home, the Scriptural prescription for accomplishing this being the only means he knew, disagreeable as he often found it—for he was withal an affectionate father; not naturally severe; only very conscientious; obstinate in the performance of what he saw to be his duty, however difficult.

"Yi, yi, yi!" he shook his head and frowned at the dirty kitchen, "but you're the doppel of a housekeeper, Aunt Rosy! You ain't the nice housekeeper your little sister Susie is. Well, I guess anyhow not! Yi, yi, if the neighbors seen our kitchen so through-outter yet!"

"Yes, well, but when I tell you onct how Lizzie won't help along when I tell her to," his sister-in-law complained as she began to dish up sausage and fried potatoes, while Mr. Schwenckton went to the sink to wash his hands, "you'll see for yourself, Mister, how I can't get through all by myself. Lizzie she run—"

"Lizzie!" the farmer broke in, raising his voice above the running water, "stop that splashin' at the tub and come now to your supper."

"Ye-yes, sir," the child stammered, her teeth almost chattering. As she dried her hands on her apron and

came to the table, Aunt Rosy gave her a look as who should say, "You just wait! Don't think because he cut me short that I ain't tellin' on you! You just wait!"

"Where's Sammy?" asked Mr. Schwenckton.

"Upstairs settin'," his sister-in-law told him as she carried the food from the stove to the table. "With Susie. Susie she's too poorly to be let alone, whiles I gotta be down here."

Mr. Schwenckton shook his head dolefully, his face, as it emerged from the roller-towel, looking deeply troubled.

"Well, come everybody now and set. I want to get eat and hurry up to Susie."

During the long "blessing" invoked by the head of the house, after they were all seated, Meely's was the only head unbowed. The expression of her face (while fulsome words of gratitude were directed to the throne of God) suggested anything but thankfulness as she surveyed the platter of sausage floating in a lake of grease, the burnt potatoes, the pale, heavy pie.

At the "Amen" she rose at once, went to a cupboard and brought back to the table a fresh napkin for herself.

The temporary housekeeper spoke up in self-defense against the implied criticism of this gesture on Meely's part. "Well, if I did forget your napkin again, I must say I wasn't raised to eat so hogglish myself that I need a napkin to my meals!"

"You've got no need, Aunt Rosy," her brother-in-law mildly admonished her, "to speak so unpolite. Us we all know," he added as they all began to help themselves, each one for himself, as was their custom, "that Meely was raised more refined than us."

"Well, I wouldn't go so far as to say that, Mister," Aunt Rosy resentfully objected. "To call myself common yet toward what she is! I ain't beittin' myself that much! I certainly consider myself as good as other ones; and so I likewise consider your poor, sweet, little wife, Sam Schwenckton! If she'd heerd you'd compared her to this here stranger and said she was common toward what this here stranger is—"

"Ach, Aunt Rosy, be penceable," Mr. Schwenckton checked this whining tirade. "Meely ain't ezactly a stranger to us, even if we didn't get acquainted with her till here this fall. You can't call a cousin a stranger yet!"

"You ain't got no proof she's your cousin. She don't look like as if she's your cousin. Nor act or speak like none of your cousins I ever met up with."

"Yes, well, you never met up with none of the Berks County Schwencktons. They're different, too, again from us Schwencktons here in Dauphin county. They're better educated that way and more refined. Meely," he addressed their boarder, his tone anxious, his eyes worried, "how do you think my Susie is today?"

"She can't get better so long as you keep her room dark and don't air it, Mr. Schwenckton. Air and light are all she needs to get well."

"Yes, well, but I don't hold with them doctors that says it's unsanitary to keep the windows shut and the room dark when you're sick," Mr. Schwenckton pronounced conclusively—and from a conclusion once reached, a position once taken, the power did not exist that could move Sam Schwenckton.

He drew a deep sigh. "I did hope Susie was gettin' better for me after her lookin' so bright yesterday."

"The reason she was so much brighter and better yesterday," said Meely, "was because when Aunt Rosy was taking a nap, I covered Susie and the baby with blankets and aired the room! Threw open all the doors and windows and left them open for an hour! Then I washed Susie and changed her nightgown and the bed linen. She and the baby slept after that for four hours! That's why she was better yesterday."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## Cheapside First Home of Great British Bank

How came the bank of England to be built? And why the appellation "The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street?" Mr. H. Rooksby Steele, a well-known London architect, supplies the answers in an article on the architectural history of Britain's bullion house. Many think that Sir John Soane, the wizard of Lincoln's Inn fields, built the bank. His are the girding walls, but in the raising of the fabric three other names—those of Sampson, Taylor and Cockerell—have to be joined. Mercer's hall, Cheapside, was the bank's first home; but a quick move was made to the Grocer's hall, in Poultry, and it was not until 1752 that the foundation stone of the present bank was laid. George Sampson was the first architect, and it is curious that no building, other than the bank, can be attributed to his

hand, a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer comments. In the cornice extending the full length of the building, Taylor sculptured an excellent figure of Britannia, some years after the completion of the building. "This carving, the 'trade mark' of the bank," writes Mr. Steele, "was probably the inspiration for that trite appellation, the 'Old Lady of Threadneedle Street.'" Taylor added to Sampson's building, and in 1870 the Gordon riots led the directors to fear that the adjoining church of St. Christopher-le-Stocks might lend itself as a dangerous vantage point for a mob, so powers were obtained, the fabric was pulled down, and more extensions were made.

No man's good intentions ever boosted him into the hero class.

## The Kitchen Cabinet

(© 1927, Western Newspaper Union.)

Wake! For the sun, who scattered into flight  
The stars before him from the field of night,  
Drives night along with them from heav'n and strikes  
The sultan's turret with a shaft of light.  
—The Rubaiyat.

### GOOD THINGS TO EAT.

We all like something new, though we are told "There is nothing new under the sun." Dainty tidbits always delight a hostess who likes to entertain. No matter how humble the home, when shared by one's friends it always better enjoyed. Expense should not enter into our plans for hospitality; it is the gift of ourselves which money cannot buy, which makes true hospitality.

**Apricot Charlotte.**—Dissolve one-third of a carton of gelatin in one-fourth of a cupful of cold water, add a cupful of boiling water and three-fourths of a cupful of sugar, the juice of a lemon and a cupful of mashed apricot pulp. When cold add one cupful of whipped cream. Set on ice and serve well chilled.

A dainty cake to serve with tea of an afternoon is:

**Orange Croutons.**—Bake a sponge cake in a pan as thin as one-half inch. Cut into rounds when baked and spread with the following: Grate the rind of an orange, add one-fourth cupful of butter, a tablespoonful of lemon juice, set into a dish of boiling water and add two well-beaten egg yolks with one-fourth of a cupful of sugar. Stir and cook until the egg is well cooked. Cool and spread over the circles of cake. Cover with a frosting made with the egg whites well beaten, then boiling hot sugar sirup poured over the egg. Baked frosting or a meringue may be used and lightly browned in the oven.

**Different Muffins.**—Roll out dough in long strips, spread with butter and sugar creamed together and a bit of vanilla added. Sprinkle grated nutmeg and cinnamon and cover with raisins and currants. Roll up and cut into small rings. Set to rise and bake in a hot oven.

**Panocha.**—Put four cupfuls of brown sugar, one cupful of milk and two ounces of butter over the fire and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Boil until the mixture forms a soft ball when dropped into cold water. Add one-half pint of pecans and stir until it begins to thicken. Turn quickly into a shallow greased pan or into small gem pans well greased. Cool and cut into squares or remove from the gem-pans.

Being one of the most easily digested of foods and one that can be served in so many ways, fish should be more often used in the family menu.

### Things Worth Trying.

A nice hot sandwich to serve with a cup of cocoa or tea on a cold afternoon is prepared as follows: Spread thinly a slice of bread with butter, then with orange marmalade. Put together in pairs and cut into any desired shape after removing the crusts. Lay in a pan and place in the gas oven to toast a light brown on both sides. Serve hot.

**Stuffed Green Peppers.**—Wash four green peppers and parboil ten minutes in water to cover, to which has been added one-fourth teaspoonful of soda. Cut into halves lengthwise, remove the seeds and fill with creamed oysters; cover with buttered crumbs and brown under the gas flame. To prepare the oysters, cook until plump in their own liquor. Add to a white sauce made of three tablespoonfuls of butter; when hot add three tablespoonfuls of flour and one and one-half cupfuls of milk. Cook until smooth and thick. Season with salt and pepper.

**Washington Pie.**—Cream one-fourth of a cupful of butter, add one cupful of sugar, two well-beaten eggs and one-half cupful of milk. Sift two and one-half teaspoonfuls of baking powder with one and two-thirds cupfuls of flour and add to the first mixture, beating well. Bake in layer tins and put together with whipped cream or fruit. Fruit may be used between the layers and whipped cream on top.

**Frozen Tomato Salad.**—Turn a quart of canned tomatoes from the can and let them stand an hour. Rub through a sieve, add three tablespoonfuls of sugar and season highly with salt and cayenne and a little onion juice. Turn into half-pound balling powder cans and pack in ice and salt until well frozen. Remove from the molds, cut into slices and serve on lettuce with mayonnaise dressing. Garnish with walnut meats.

**Southern Corn Dish.**—Add two eggs to a can of corn, season well with salt and pepper and two tablespoonfuls of butter; pour over a pint of scalded milk and set into the oven to bake until thick and brown over the top. Serve hot.

Gruels should be taken slowly, in order to allow the saliva to act upon the starch and be thoroughly mixed in the mouth.

Nellie Maxwell

# GUATEMALA



A Young Maid of Guatemala.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

LIKE ancient Gaul, Guatemala may be divided into three parts, with a special brand of climate assigned to each. There are the lowlands of the Atlantic and Pacific—the hot country; the uplands, ranging from 3,000 to 6,000 feet—the temperate land; and the highlands, where fanglike peaks stretch up to 14,000 feet above the sea—the cold country. In Guatemala climate is a thing of altitude rather than latitude.

The American visitor to Guatemala is likely to land at Puerto Barrios, on the Atlantic or Caribbean side of this country. This port, set on the inner rim of Amatique bay, is alluringly beautiful from the steamer. Though one accepts it as a tropical dream come true, it does not bear close inspection. Here is the north coast terminal of the International railways and important buildings of the United Fruit company. Aside from these, Puerto Barrios does not intrigue one as a site for permanent residence, nor is the hotel the type to which one yearns to return.

A few decades ago the Guatemalan government concluded to build a railway connecting its capital and west coast coffee plantations with the north coast markets. When this road was half-finished, both money and credit ran low, leaving a pair of rails beginning at tidewater and ending at a spot in the broad, warm desert surrounding El Rancho. Then an American stepped into the breach, completed the railway, and made it possible for passengers to ride on a well-equipped train from the shipside to most of the population centers of the republic.

First Impressions of Guatemala have to do with countless bunches of green bananas, for this northern fringe of the republic is bananaland. The great fruit farms are recent, and to make them, the low, rich, swampy coastland was drained and made sanitary.

### Race Between Time and Decay.

Railways, banana walks, administration buildings, imposing hospitals, modern towns—these have all been built in order that a fleet of vessels may be fed two-score million bunches of bananas yearly. It is efficiency and organization par excellence. Reduced to its least common denominator, it is a race between time and decay. The cutter, mule carrier, pick-up train, fast steamship, radio telephone, fruit dispatch, all combine to deliver this highly perishable commodity from the banana farm to the corner store in Iowa before rot overtakes the fruit and turns profit into loss.

We leave bananaland aboard the little train of the International railways and start south. From Quirigua the railroad winds up the Motagua valley through plantations, skirting abrupt hillsides. The train crosses the Motagua river every few kilometers, and, all along the way, passes women standing under palm sheds on the stream banks, washing clothing, children and themselves.

After leaving Zacapa the long climb to Guatemala City begins, over a road that winds in horseshoe curves, up mountainsides, through cuts and tunnels, over fills and bridges. Now and then one glimpses the shingly gravel bars of the Motagua and the brush fishtraps set by the Indians. There are villages where vegetable gardens are built on stilts, and perpendicular cornfields.

And still one climbs, past hot sulphur springs with steam clouds curling above them and deep railway cuts through volcanic ash. The air grows chill as the altitude increases. At sunset the profiles of purple peaks stand out against a yellow sky. Then comes night with more chill and finally, below in the plain, the twinkling lights of Guatemala City.

**Capital Often Destroyed.** Guatemala City is not of the New World. It belongs to Old Spain. It is a city suggestive of the Moors, with narrow streets, varicolored houses, deep-set barred windows, bright patios, porticos and colonnades. Guatemala's capital has always been Vulcan's plaything. He has shaken it

down, even destroyed it, and has seen it rise again on three different sites.

In 1527 Pedro de Alvarado began the first city on the lower slopes of Agua. In 1541 came a night of torrential rain, lightning, thunder and earth rumblings, then a terrifying shudder. The crater of Agua was torn apart and the lake which filled it rushed down to overwhelm the city.

A new capital, built a few miles to the northeast, in time became one of the most imposing cities of the New World, with splendid palaces and more than 60 impressive church buildings. The old city was but a memory, earthquakes were forgotten, and all seemed well as the new capital grew richer and more powerful. In 1717, with an eruption of Fuego, came an earthquake that leveled the city. Again it was built and again shaken down in 1773, the year of the Boston Tea party.

The capital was again transferred, this time 30 miles away to the site of the present city, and the life of the people moved on until in 1917 came a series of tremblings that first cracked the thick adobe walls and then caused them to crumble. Since 1917 the capital city has again been practically rebuilt, thus illustrating the tenacity with which people cling to homes that have been erected where the shadow of some volcano falls.

The population of the present capital is more than 100,000. The city, set in the midst of the Valley of the Rio de las Vacas (Cow river), is hemmed in by low mountain ridges and a group of imposing volcanoes.

The central plaza is not beautiful now. The earthquake partly ruined the imposing cathedral to the east; the Chinese, as a memorial, have built a number of pagoda-like buildings to the north; the dignified Centennial building occupies another side; and the Portales, with little one-and-two-story shops, complete the quadrangle. It is a curious picture of ruin, dignity, tawdriness and pagodas.

The street paving is none too good. The four-wheel coach, drawn by two dejected steeds, is still the usual mode of conveyance, although the city is full of private motor cars.

### On the Mixco Road.

Ten miles away, in the village of Mixco, live the Indians who each day carry to the capital the foodstuffs which its people buy. The road from Mixco to Guatemala City is one of the fascinating moving pictures of Central America. These Indians raise the vegetables, fowls, eggs, and fruits that they sell, and also manufacture the simple necessities of everyday life, such as coarse-woven saddlebags, hempen belts used by the driver to fasten the pack to his animal, women's blouses and girdles, and hundreds of other articles used by housewife, laborer, and ox-driver.

Down in Mixco finds everyone up, preparing for the long, daily walk to the market place and back home again. Early risers set out with their wares packed in a broad basket, borne on the head if the carrier be a woman, or if a man, in a cascade carried on the back, with a broad leather tumpline leading from either side of the load about the forehead.

By nine o'clock there is a procession ten miles long, more fascinating, varied, and interesting than any circus parade that ever followed a callopo. Women with leathery, wrinkled skin, gray hair, and shriveled bare arms and legs, still trot back and forth on this 20-mile errand each day, carrying to market a crate of eggs, a half dozen fowls, a tray of agucates, or any one of a hundred things to eat and wear.

Here comes a family. The father bears a heavy load of corn or beans or other vegetables, bending forward under the weight and balancing it with the tumpline. The mother, perhaps, juggles a wide variety of tray of vegetables on her head, while she carries a pair of chickens in either hand and an infant swung in a shawl about her body. A brood of children follows, each laden according to size and capacity. The family dog, anemic, apologetic, is always in the party and frequently wears a necklace of dried lemons to ward off canine ills.