GINGER ELLA

by Ethel Hueston

Illustrations by Irwin Myers

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STORY FROM THE START

In the usually quiet home of Rev. Mr. Tolliver of Red Thrush Iowa, his motherless daughters, Helen, Miriam and Ellen—"Ginger Ella"—are busy "grooming" their sister Marjory for participation in the "beauty pageant" that evening. With Eddy Jackson, prosperous young farmer, her escort, Marjory leaves for the anticipated triumph. Overwork has affected Mr. Tolliver's eyes to the point of threatened blindness. Ginger has tried in many ways to add to the family's slender income, but she is not discouraged. Marjory wins the beauty prize, $50.00. She gives the money to her father as part of the expense necessary for the treatment of his eyes by Chicago specialists. Mr. Tolliver leaves for Chicago with Miriam. Ginger meets Alexander Murdock.

CHAPTER III—Continued

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Ginger sat motionless. Her slim fingers froze about the handle of the little gold cup. Presently she set it down with a determination that spoke volumes to the accustomed ears of Marjory and Eddy Jackson.

"Let's go for a drive now," she said coldly. "Eddy, you've got to take Marjory in front with you. I want Mr. Murdock to tell me all about the—the groceries. I think they are so fascinating."

"But I was prepared for you," objected Eddy. "I planned to give you a driving lesson."

It had long been Ginger's great desire to learn to drive, but now, with a sigh, she relinquished that beautiful dream to save her lovely Marjory from the machinations of this base pretender. Around the world—as a stoker, perhaps. Or working his way from port to port by the sale of vegetables.

Marjory slid into the front seat with Eddy Jackson. Ginger triumphantly drew Alexander Murdock in by her side, and immediately set herself to snubbing him. When occasionally, in sheer youth and good spirits, she forgot her annoyance and yielded to the pleasure of the hour, she consoled herself with the thought that at least she had saved Marjory for the future, and they parted at the parsonage two hours later merrily enough.

Three days passed before they had news from Chicago. It was not very encouraging. There was no improvement in Mr. Tolliver's condition. His eyes were still clouded in the misty fog. The doctors were pessimistic. By all means he should remain at hand for daily observation and treatment, for an operation if it came to that. But in the meantime absolute rest was imperative. He must have entire freedom from nervous strain, entire lack of worry and responsibility. Fresh air, good food, mild exercise, these were the tonics that by feeding the body would strengthen his sight. Particularly they warned that a shock of any nature whatsoever might precipitate total and permanent blindness.

In writing this sad news to her sisters, Miriam begged them to face it bravely, and to greet their father with their usual light good cheer.

"Be very cheerful," she begged, "oh, very. He doesn't say anything, but he looks so sad."

The girls at home went into immediate consultation. Ginger was first to give expression to her thoughts. Ginger was always first.

"There's just one thing about it," she said stoutly. "He's in for a good long siege of it, and we must have more money. You've got to let me go to work."

"What can you do, dear?" queried Helen mildly. It was Helen's mildness that so maddened Ginger. How could one expect to pull gloriously out of a crisis without fire and flame and flash? Helen was the sort to ask what one could do, when obviously one must do something!

"I don't care what," cried Ginger, passionately. "Anything. I'll scrub, or take in washing, or go on the stage or anything."

Helen considered gravely. Helen was the sort to consider gravely in such a moment.

"The twins must go to normal just as we have planned," she decided at last. "We have the future to consider, as well as the present. I will simply postpone my marriage for a year, and apply for a school. Miss Jenkins will come and stay here with you, Ginger."

Ginger flung herself upon her sister's neck. "Don't do that," she begged. "Oh, don't. It isn't fair. Helen, for you to do all the giving up."

Marjory, for her part, was in favor of abandoning the normal course, which required two years to finish, in favor of a stenographic one, which could be crowded into six months if necessary. But of that they knew their father would disapprove. Stenography—private offices—male employers—lovely girlhood— Impossible! Mr. Tolliver had clung to his gentle old-fashioned ideas in spite of the changing times.

Ginger gazed at Marjory despairingly. "Oh, Margie, I should think you could do something. The world just overflowing with millionaires—praying every night for pretty wives—and you just wearing out here in Red Thrush."

Marjory carefully inspected a pink forefinger, questioning the shape of a nail. "Well, I'm willing," she assented, generously. "Trot one out."

Later in the afternoon as Eddy Jackson was passing in his small car, Ginger signaled him to stop and ran out to the curb.

"Something terrible is going on in this house," she said, gloomily. "Father is no better, and he is pretty discouraged. And Helen is going to postpone her wedding, and it will just make him sick."

Eddy turned the key in the car, stilling the engine. "That requires silent meditation," he said slowly. "What do you think about it?"

"I think it is terrible. I think it will break his heart."

They talked a while, and then he walked with her slowly up the flagstone path.

"Helen?" he called into the open door, and when she came out, he motioned her to join them in the vine-shaded corner by the hammock. "I want to mix in other people's business, and put my fingers in other peoples' pie, and paddle other people's canoes and everything," he warned her.

"Do you? That is not quite like you, Eddy."

"I am changing. Ginger tells me that you think of postponing your wedding, Helen. We talked it over, and she and I think—"

Ginger sat up in the hammock and looked very important. This was showing some deference to her opinions. She tried to mirror in her small piquant face unutterable depths of wisdom.

"She and I agree that it would be the worst thing that could happen."

"Eddy, do you not see how impossible it is for me to leave home when father needs me? Horace will understand. He will be glad to do his share in helping out."

"I am not thinking of Horace. I am thinking of your father. The doctors say he must have complete mental rest. Do you think he can be happy and serenely quiet, when he knows that you are sacrificing your dearest aims and plans on his account? Will not every touch of your hand and sound of your voice be a reproach to him?"

"Oh, Eddy, I couldn't bear to go away and be happy by myself, with father and the girls—" Quick tears flooded her quiet eyes.

"Yes, I am sure, Helen, you would be happier to stay at home, and work, and sacrifice yourself. But you father's happiness is the thing that counts right now. Look at it this way, Helen. I think—and Ginger agrees with me—"

"Indeed I do," said Ginger stoutly.

"We think you should go ahead as if this little setback amounts to nothing. Make light of it. Go on with your wedding. Helen, don't you see, that if you teach school you will be away, out of town, tied up with your work? But if you marry, you are right here at hand, ready to help. Your time will be your own. You can help Ginger, help your father, and he will not realize what you are doing for him. If necessary, you and Horace can come and stay in the parsonage part of the time. But don't add to your father's burden the knowledge that he is stealing a year of his daughter's happiness. I dare say he is sick at heart, this very moment, dreading to come home and have you tell him, sweetly, that your happiness has been burned on the altar of daughterly duty."

Helen studied him seriously. "You are a wise, wise boy," she said gently. "And I think you are right. I could help more, that is true, if I were here in Red Thrush. And I know it would grieve him bitterly to have us change our plans. I could come every day and help them."

"And they could call on me in a pinch—"

"But Ginger is a such a child. So much responsibility—"

"Responsibility never hurt anybody. You had it when you were young, and it did you no harm. And Ginger is not a child. She is growing up."

Ginger stood up with a bored hauteur. "Ellen is grown up now, if you ask me. And if you will excuse me, I shall go upstairs. I have some very important work to do."

On Friday afternoon, Mr. Tolliver and Miriam returned to a parsonage that smelled sweetly of wild roses, to three girls whose light glad voices gave no hint of the pain with which they had watched his approach, head lowered, shoulders sagging dispiritedly, his arm limp beneath Miriam's hand. And under the charm of their laughter, their caresses, their welcoming delight, his shoulders straightened presently, the tired lines in his face gave way to those of pleasure, and soon his laughter joined theirs.

"I can't take off the glasses just yet, you see," he said huskily. "Still in the fog, as you might say."

"I rather thought it would take longer," said Helen sympathetically. "It would be foolish to rush things."

"But it's really too bad, father," put in Ginger gaily, "because I just wish you could see the carryings-on in this old house. Do you know what Marjory has on hand now? A grocery clerk, father. And not regular groceries, either. Canned ones. The Orange and Black. Maybe he will give us a discount."

Light laughter, light talk, which hid the sadness beneath, but did not hide the tenderness, the pervading sympathy, the great gladness that they were five together, even in their sorrow.

"Ginger Tells Me That You Think of Postponing Your Wedding, Helen."

CHAPTER IV

In the living room Ginger found her three sisters. Helen was mending a frayed cuff for her father as prosaically as though in two weeks she would not be a bride trembling at the altar of her marriage. Miriam was straightening up the desk with an air of great distaste. Marjory was delicately powdering her nose, watching the operation in the mirror of a small metal case.

"Marjory, where did you get that vanity?" Ginger demanded.

Marjory closed it hastily and put it in her pocket. But Ginger was insistent.

"Marjory let me see that vanity. That's brand-new. Where did you get it?"

Marjory, thus driven, produced the article and confessed to an extravagance. She had bought it. It had cost her twenty-five cents. She had bought it from Alice Ideman. And at last, thoroughly committed, she explained in detail.

"It's really a very cute idea, Helen," she said volubly, hoping by many words to distract attention from the money phase of the transaction. You see, the compact costs a quarter. Alice had to sell four of them, and each one of the four who bought, had to promise to sell four more. Then when Alice sends her dollar to the company, for the four she sold, they send her a solid silver one. Just lovely."

"Did you promise to sell four?"

"Yes. I had to. And when I sell them, I send my dollar to the company, and they send me a sterling silver one. Isn't it a cute idea?"

"It is like the old chain letter idea—"

"Exactly. Where you had to copy the prayer—"

"Or break the chain—"

"And it goes on and on—"

"All over the world."

"Why, they'll sell thousands and thousands of them."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Seventeenth of March Once "Noah's Ark Day"

Long before the Irish taught us that March 17 was St. Patrick's day, this date was celebrated in England for a very curious reason. In the Middle ages it was regarded as the anniversary of the day upon which Noah entered the ark. Noah's Ark day was specially made the occasion for the performance of the mystery play that dramatized with considerable freedom the Biblical record of the flood. In this Noah's wife was always the principal comic character, being depicted as the typical shrew.

The quarrels between Noah and his helpmate created great amusement for the spectators. When the ark is ready the lady stoutly refuses to go in unless she may take some of her friends along. The patriarch, however, will not stand much nonsense, and when the time for embarkation comes he dispaches his three sons to bring their mother aboard. They find her with her gossips in a tavern, and after much rough by-play and broad comedy they seize her and drag her to the ark. Arrived there, she breaks out as a worse termagant than ever; shrieking with rage, she sets about beating her husband, much to the diversion of the spectators of merry England.—Manchester Guardian.

In a Nutshell

People never will get over being surprised that chestnut burrs are not as rough on the inside as they are on the outside.

The greatest burden in the world is superstition.—Milton.

WHY WE BEHAVE LIKE HUMAN BEINGS

By GEORGE DORSEY, Ph. D., LL. D.

Why Walking Is More Restful Than Standing

IN WALKING, each leg rests half the time. We tire standing because neither leg gets rested. The shoulder muscles which hold the head erect also ache from the strain in standing. As we nap in a chair the head nods.

Flat feet are not due to a giving way of ligaments; ligaments limit joint movement. Feet become "flat" when the muscles of the arch fail to support it; the arch breaks down. The result is a mid-tarsal joint. This is most likely to happen in long, narrow feet.

Short feet and high insteps go with large calves. To raise our body on our toes, we lift our heel. The toes are the fulcrum, the power is the calf muscles; the weight falls on the foot at the ankle joint but nearest the power at the heel. Hence the greater need for large calf muscles. But small calves go with long heel bones. As the foot is a lever of the second order, the long heel brings the weight nearer the fulcrum—that is, the toes. Hence "flat-foots" do not step off their toes; the fallen arch destroys the lever of the foot.

We nod our head between skull and first vertebrae, or atlas; rotate, between atlas and second vertebrae, or axis. Both movements are limited by ligaments; otherwise the signal cord would be crushed.

The main business of the face is to hold the teeth-bearing jaws; eyes and nose moved in by accident. The infant's face and neck seem small because the brain is so large. Their real growth begins with the eruption of the teeth.

The skull is a fulcrum for the jaw muscles in chewing. Muscles to hold the fulcrum steady develop with the teeth. The neck grows larger. With the teeth all in place the neck reaches normal size, the rounded "baby-face" disappears; strong jaws, powerful muscles, and prominences and ridges on bones of face and head support the muscles of mastication. The tiny mastoid processes below the infant's ears become adult structures as big as thumbs, required for muscle support.

The first, or milk, teeth should be in place by the end of the second year. Meanwhile the transverse ridges in the roof of the infant's mouth disappear. The permanent dentition begins with the first molars in the seventh year; incisors in the eighth and ninth; premolars in the tenth and eleventh; canine and second molars in the thirteenth to fourteenth; third molars, or wisdom teeth, in the seventeenth to fortieth year.

Startling changes of far-reaching consequence mark the years of adolescence for both sexes. As these changes are both physical and mental, and as they proceed under impulses from the gonads acting as glands of internal secretion, they will be described in the chapter devoted to the endocrine organs.

After maturity the body's chief task is to maintain its equilibrium: produce enough energy and heat to keep up repairs and carry on. But, from ovum to death, the body never ceases to change.

Old age or senile changes precede natural death. These appear toward the end of a span of life which varies in different species. This span of life for some invertebrates is less than 100 hours; for some insects, 17 years; for some fishes and reptiles, over 200 years; for some birds and mammals, 120 years.

Longevity is not, as Weismann claimed, related to size of body. Some mammals live less than two years, some locusts seventeen. A dog is old at 20. I have seen a parrot 117 years old; it matured in its first year. A tortoise can live 350 years. No elephant known has exceeded 130 years. Nor does death "naturally" follow the reproductive stage; innumerable animals long survive their sex life. But every animal must reach sex maturity or its kind dies with it.

Old age is decrepitude; the body is worn out. The mechanism the infant acquired to walk with breaks down. The spine is not so supple, the cartilage disks between vertebrae shrink. This decreases stature—as much as three inches after fifty. The spine both collapses and "stoops with age." The knees are bent, the hip joints stiff. The muscles shrink. The body loses its natural fat. Folds of skin appear on neck and face. The toothless jaws atrophy and the mouth loses its shape. Cheeks and temples cave in.

The brain loses weight—in the last 40 years of life as much as three ounces. The heart is enlarged from over-action to keep the blood coursing through thick, hard arteries. The pulse mounts again. It was 134 at birth, 110 at the end of the first year, 72 at twenty-one. After eighty, it is 80. The lungs lose their elasticity, the walls become thicker.

Many women after fifty show a thicker neck, hair on the face, deeper-toned voice, more prominent cheekbones, ridges over the eyes. Their "feminine" traits are less feminine. It is as though the inactivity of the gonads permitted a return to a neutral condition, halfway between male and female.

Old age, senility, decrepitude; the body is worn out, it can no longer function. Death.

(© by George A. Dorsey.)

WHAT CRETE IS LIKE

A Bread Shop in Candia, Crete.

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

SAIL from Piraeus, port of Athens, skirt the islands of Melos and Antimelos, of the Cyclades group, and after 15 hours of sailing the mountainous profile of Crete comes into view.

The island has area of about 3,300 square miles, being 160 miles long and varying in width from 35 to 7½ miles. But what matter 160 miles in length? They could be traversed in a few hours at most by railroad—if there were railroads. It takes days and days to cover Crete by land from one end to the other.

The more accessible sections of Crete are now covered with a network of fairly important highways, but in remote districts the traveler must use the traditional means of transportation—donkey or mule, over trails or uneven paths. And if it is necessary to adapt oneself to the fatigue and the needs of one's animals, it is also essential to take into account the aversion which every Cretan feels at the prospect of traveling at night.

The whole island is dominated by the mountains which intersect it. They include the Lasithi range in the east, with Mount Dicte; the Psiloriti, with Mount Ida near the center of the island, and to the west the White mountains, locally, and rightly, named the "Desert of Stone." These peaks rise to more than 7,000 feet and are covered with snow in winter, but in summer and early autumn large herds of sheep graze on the slopes.

After the traveler leaves these herds, and the round stone huts where the solitary shepherds live, he may wander over many trails without meeting a living soul.

Then, from a mountain path, suddenly a great plain will come into view—like that of Lasithi, formerly occupied by a lake.

On a broad, elevated pass one sometimes sees a straight line of windmills, occasionally as many as twenty or more, each placed in a specially advantageous position to catch all the wind which the large wings require. The peasants from the villages climb up to them with their donkeys laden with grain. On the other hand, along the steep mountain slopes water mills are built in the ravines. The mills run only in winter, for during summer there is no rain; hence no water.

Ancient Altars in Grottoes.

While Crete has an extremely heavy rainfall, it is limited to the wet season, which commences in October or November. The water accumulates and rushes down the mountains in violent torrents; it penetrates the soil and circulates through a vast network of limestone grottoes. It was in these grottoes, now a fairyland of stalactites and stalagmites, that the first inhabitants of the island established the worship of their gods. Today one finds among the rocks the altars and paraphernalia of ancient rites.

Some of these grottoes are veritable pits, into which one descends with the aid of ropes. One readily appreciates the impression they must have produced on the imagination of the men of other days, when one notes the respectful awe they still command. The natives in their folklore still people these caves with monstrous men and animals.

Villages dot the borders of the Cretan plains, and the inhabitants come to their doors and smilingly invite the passer-by to enter.

Occasionally one meets a peasant on his way to the village, carrying on his head a basket overflowing with grapes. He will stop, select the most beautiful cluster, and offer them to the stranger with touching simplicity.

In regions which are less protected from the elements, the locust tree grows, but it is bent and gnarled by its battle with the violent north wind. There are vineyards on the hillsides and vegetables grow in the river beds, which are dry in summer, or on the thin layers of fertile soil which cover the stone of some of the seashore plains. Irrigation is practiced intelligently; large windmills raise the water, or norias grind away as the water is raised pail by pail from wells.

Canea and Candia.

Canea, surrounded by Venetian ramparts, is the capital of Crete; it is situated in the western part of the island.

Candia, farther to the east and also on the northern shore, is the only other city of commercial importance. During the Venetian occupation of the island this stronghold was known as Megalo Castro (Great Fortress); but many centuries before the Venetians held sway in Crete and before the Saracens left their impress, the inhabitants of the island had established a trading station at this point, to judge from the fragments of cut stone discovered in the sea near the shore.

Today Candia is nearing the 40,000 population mark. Its white suburbs extend far beyond the old fortifications. A few years ago an English engineer was commissioned to reorganize the port. The work is being pursued with due regard to the historic value of the old fortifications.

The southern coast of Crete has few safe anchorages and most of the trade is handled by sailing craft and motor boats. Large ships cannot approach the wharfs of the small harbors, but are obliged to remain some distance offshore. By means of a crane, merchandise is unloaded into a caique, which then approaches the beach as closely as possible. There naked men, standing in water up to their shoulders and with pads on their heads, seize the various objects and carry them ashore. As soon as the ground swell rises, work must stop.

Often at night, if the sea is rough, a ship will approach the shore, blow its whistle, and with the aid of a megaphone a conversation will follow between vessel and port official. If the load offered is unimportant, the ship pursues its course without stopping.

These villages by the sea are very isolated; in daylight they are hardly visible and at night not at all, as no light marks them. They are as if "thrown into the sea" by the mountain, which bars their access to the interior. They are at the mercy of heavy southern storms, which also deprive them of any outside communication.

An account of Crete would not be complete if we did not describe the means of locomotion to travelers. There is but one railroad in Crete and it is three miles long. It was built in recent years for the transportation of stone from a nearby quarry to the harbor of Candia. The locomotives, christened Minos, Ariadne, and Theseus, in honor of mythological characters that have played prominent roles in the legendary history of the island, are justly admired by the entire population.

Many Motor Cars There.

Road construction has promoted the use of the automobile, but even where there are no roads a motor car is frequently seen. What with the mire of the mule paths, the stones, the brush, and the fields, one traveling by automobile never knows when or if he will reach his destination, although his car carries the inscription in large letters: "Express."

He who leaves Candia in the autumn for a trip across the island sees spread before him large expanses of yellow and silvery green, with a few lines of austere black; these are the vineyards mixed in with the olive trees, while a few cypresses stand solitary and in a line.

This vista continues even after he begins to climb in order to reach the desert interior of Crete, for the vineyards and their attendant olive trees grow to a great elevation. Though they space out the farther one gets from the plain, nevertheless they remain equally luxuriant. They creep into small hollows or cluster on the very steep slopes—sometimes they give the impression that they are going to slide off into space—while pretty vine arbors shade the streets of mountain villages.

Raisins play an important part in the economic life of Crete. In the large cities and at the ports one may see in the rather dark factories the different processes the raisins undergo. In Sitia, in eastern Crete, one may find upon the wharves immense golden areas of fruit drying in the sun before being packed in cases for shipment abroad. Fresh grapes are exported to Greece and to Egypt.

Crete takes an important place among olive-oil producing countries. The oil is extracted in primitive presses by the peasants and on a larger scale in factories. Much of the table oil is consumed in America.

The tobacco plantations of Crete have made great strides in recent years, as a direct result of one of the most significant events of the eastern Mediterranean—the exchange of nationals between Greece and Turkey following the Treaty of Lausanne. Repatriation brought to the island many experienced tobacco growers from Asia Minor.