

# BRIGHT STAR

By Mary Schumann

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## CHAPTER VIII—Continued

Fluvanna gasped as revelation came. "Kezzie! . . . Not Jerry?"

"I suppose we couldn't keep it much longer. You'd have heard. In fact I'm surprised Lizzie hasn't been over already, ranting to you!"

Fluvanna shook her head, gave a hopeless sound in her throat. "Don't you realize what you've done? It's not Lizzie—it's Ellen! The poor child had confided in me all spring. She was in love for the first time in her life! . . . Oh, Kezzie—Kezzie!"

Kezia drew her mother's hands down from her face, which she had covered. Her voice was light and winning. "Sweetest darling Mother, you'll allow him to come to the house? . . . You said you would! And you'll be nice to him when he comes?"

Fluvanna thought, "Was she really thinking of marrying him?"

"Yes, he may come to the house. There must be no more secret meetings."

"You lamb!" She kissed her mother. "And you'll not say anything to make him uncomfortable? He's very sensitive. He said it almost made him shriek the way the Pendletons looked down on him!"

It was Fluvanna's swift thought that receiving Jerry casually and pleasantly might remove the piquancy of the situation as far as Kezia was concerned. "I'll be careful of his—sensitivity," she replied.

Kezia looked at her doubtfully. Then, "I knew I could count on you to understand," she murmured. "I'll go out and help Anna get the lunch on the table."

She went out directly lunch was over. About one o'clock it began to rain, a cold drizzle. The rain was too late to help the baked farms and gardens, but was soothing to taut nerves, strained with too much heat and sunlight. Fluvanna wandered about the house rather forlornly.

She would take a hot bath, and then a nap. No, she would lie down first. That odd pain which she had so often lately, was coming back. She went into her room and closed the window where the rain beat in. Someone came in from the front door without ringing the bell. She heard Dorrie's voice down-home.

"Up here, Dorrie." She sat down suddenly in a chair, overcome with weakness.

"I brought you a cake I made myself," said Dorrie.

"How delicious that will be! You're so thoughtful, Dorrie." Dorrie was a good child.

"I haven't had a maid lately. I've been doing everything myself." Dorrie seemed to seek approval.

"Did Tillie get another place?"

"She had to go home because her mother was sick. I wanted to do it. . . thought I'd feel better."

Fluvanna bit her lip with the sudden pain, closed her eyes. After a moment she heard Dorrie's voice, sounding as if it were far-off, "You look so strange."

She did not answer. Then seeing Dorrie's eyes fixed on her in a kind of fright, Fluvanna answered with an effort: "Don't mind me. I'm terribly upset and worried."

"You know about it?" asked Dorrie, a little sharply.

Fluvanna nodded. Dorrie must have heard about Kezia and Jerry too. That was the reason for this visit, the cake was an offering of sympathy. "It's all so sad—so cruel." She sighed.

Something leaped in Dorrie's face; something rebellious and unkind. "Hugh told you! He said he hadn't!"

"No, not Hugh. I just heard it today. I suspected something—things puzzled me. I asked Kezia. It took her a long time, but finally she told me."

Dorrie's lip curled. "Kezia!"

Why did Dorrie speak in that tone? Why did she stare at her with such a hostile gaze? Suddenly the pain in Fluvanna's chest gripped her; her heart began to beat with quick hammer-like strokes. Faster and faster until the pain seemed to be bursting her lungs. The room revolved swiftly like a whirling black disk with a circle of light at the center. The circle of light became smaller and smaller until the blackness blotted it out altogether. She knew nothing more.

Later she became conscious of Dr. Carey holding her wrist, his finger on her pulse. His face was grave.

"I must have fainted," she murmured.

"You must have indeed."

A day or so later he said, "You'll have to face it, Fluvanna; that heart of yours is a leaky old organ. With care it might see you through some little time—a year, two—three. And then again . . ."

She listened to him with no feeling of shock. Had not some inner presentiment told her that it would not be long? "And then again . . .?"

"Three months—six months."

"I won't burden my children with

such news. Death shouldn't be heralded months in advance. It's an individual—matter." She smiled a little.

So her son and daughters only heard that the fainting attack was brought on by exhaustion and the hot weather. There was some talk of a trip and a change of climate, but this Fluvanna vetoed and the matter was dropped.

## CHAPTER IX

As the weeks wore by Hugh experienced the disintegrating effects of split emotions. Try as he would he could not reconcile the situation into ease of mind. It was like a broken dish which had been unskillfully mended. You saw at once the ugly dark line where it had been joined together. Grudgingly he admitted that Dorrie seemed to be making an effort to efface her conduct; she was conciliatory, consulted his wishes in a new way. This last was disconcerting for it continually reminded him of the reason. She had been wont to demand, not to appeal. She did not try to get another maid when Tillie left, studied a cook book, and had new dishes for dinner. She carefully recounted where she had been each day, as if to reassure him.

He had a new wife—but at what price?—he told himself. Although his longing for her did not cease, became more powerful as he became more aware of it, it was a hideous thing, humiliating him because he was helpless before it. He was often short and curt with her, then to make up for it, was carefully polite.

One day he went into a new restaurant for lunch. The owner had achieved the synthetic atmosphere of a Moorish inn, stone floors, rude fireplaces, and jugs before a drinking fountain in the wall. The place was dimly lighted and it was not until he had ordered that he saw Ellen Pendleton eating luncheon with Ronny Wakes. They occupied a red leather wall seat just opposite him.

Ellen was talking animatedly to Ronny, her frequent laughter a little feverish in its gaiety. Preoccupied with his own affairs, he had seen and heard nothing of Ellen for some time, and when Ronny left the table to telephone, Hugh crossed over.

"Hello, stranger. I haven't seen you all summer."

"It has been a long time."

Hugh fumbled. "Everything going well?" he inquired after a pause.

"Everything."

"I must be getting back to the office. By the way, you're with Ronny. How come?"

Ellen's lashes swept her cheeks, then she raised her eyes unflinchingly. "I suppose because he asked me."

"I'm squelched! But I thought—I was given to understand—that your interest lay in another direction. That soulful young chap, Jerry."

He saw an odd thing. A quiver of pain, so sentient, so defenseless, crossed her face that he thought she was going to faint. Then she was controlled; she even smiled. "Haven't you heard? His interest lies in another direction."

"I haven't heard a thing," he replied frowning. "Mind if I say he has rotten taste?"

She laughed on a low note. "Loyal as ever! . . . But—people change."

"Yes—they do," said Hugh slowly. His own predicament made him more alive to the remote suffering in her eyes. "Call on me if there's anything . . ."

Ellen shook her head firmly. "Thanks—there's nothing."

Ronny came back from the telephone with apologies. Hugh spoke to him and then took his departure. He found himself wishing he did not have to go back to the office; the work had gone flat to him and he found himself struggling to concentrate on the simplest problems. When he hung up his hat, Miss Ruskin passed with a paper in her hand. "Mr. Sloan wants to see you, Mr. Marsh."

He went into the office of the president. Sloan was telephoning but he nodded him to a chair. "Marsh," he began briskly when he hung up the receiver, "how would you like to take a vacation?"

Hugh felt a faint perspiration break out on his forehead. "You mean you're not satisfied with my work?"

Sloan gave a short laugh. "Look in the glass, my boy. You've been off color for a month. Run away for a week or so, play golf, keep out in the open air, forget the business. You're heading for something—an illness, I would say—if you don't snap out of it."

The thought clicked in Hugh's brain that twice lately he had heard of men sent on vacations by thoughtful companies, men who in a few days received a wire that their services would no longer be needed. "I'm all right," he answered brusquely. "I feel better working."

His superior played with his fountain pen. "Something bothering you?" "Something bothering you?" he inquired.

Hugh did not answer.

"Financial?"

"No."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Way Back When

By JEANNE

### FRED MACMURRAY WASHED CARS FOR A LIVING

NECESSITY is the mother of invention, they say; and if that is so I think someone should emphasize that "Courage is the father of opportunity." So many times, when things look blackest, it seems that only by drawing on reserve strength can we keep going. Suddenly we find ourselves face to face with opportunity. Everything looked hopeless before. We were really almost ready to give up. And, then looking back, we wonder how things could have seemed as bad as they were.

Fred MacMurray was born in Kankakee, Ill., in 1908, and spent his boyhood in Beaver Dam, Wis. He lived a normal small town life for an American youngster. In 1925, when he was seventeen, he was awarded the annual American Legion medal for the student showing the most well-rounded development in scholastic subjects and sports. His mother worked in offices to support them both, and Fred attended Carroll college in



Waukesha, Wis., earning his way by playing the saxophone. A broken hip forced his mother to quit work, and Fred left college to try to blow a living out of his saxophone. They moved to Hollywood, Calif., for her health and the boy was glad to get a job washing cars in a garage, to pay her hospital bills. Before he could collect his pay, the garage went bankrupt, and Fred MacMurray faced a discouraging period without a job. He tried to obtain work in the picture studios as a saxophone player, but had no luck. Things looked very black, indeed.

Then, he was signed up with a band called the California Collegians, which worked its way to New York city and was hired for the play "Three's a Crowd." Fred had a small bit which led to a slightly better part in "Roberta." A talent scout for Paramount saw him, brought him back to Hollywood, and he was given a contract which led to his success in pictures.

### POET LAUREATE OF ENGLAND WAS A PORTER IN A SALOON

WHAT romantic occupation could you possibly predict for a boy so adventurous that no one could control him, so reckless that the aunt who took care of him after his father and mother died indentured him to a merchant ship at the age of fourteen to curb him? That was John Masfield's start in life and today he holds the highest honors England can give any poet.

Born in Ledburn, Herefordshire, England, in 1874, he sailed the seas for three years. Leaving the ship in port at New York city, he took any odd job he could get. He worked in a bakery and in a livery stable. He was porter in Luke O'Connor's saloon at the Columbian hotel near Jefferson Market jail. Then he moved to Yonkers, at the north end of New York city, where



he worked in a carpet factory, rising to the magnificent position of "mistake finder" at \$8.50 per week. It was at this time, in his early twenties, that Masfield started to write poetry and in 1897 he left for London. His first volume of verses, "Salt Water Ballads," was published in 1902 opening with "A Consecration," in which he announces himself as the champion of "the dust and scum of the earth." Books of verse and novels followed, one upon the other, and John Masfield became established as one of England's greatest poets.

So, remember John Masfield before you pass judgment on that neighbor's boy who is such a holy terror or that young scamp who works in the saloon across the railroad tracks.

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## AROUND the HOUSE

Items of Interest to the Housewife

**Cooking Sour Fruit**—Sour fruit will require much less sugar, and be more digestible, if a dessert-spoonful of syrup and a pinch of bicarbonate of soda are added after cooking.

**Kidneys and Macaroni**—Cut four kidneys in halves, sprinkle with chopped parsley, salt and pepper to taste, and fry. Take one-fourth pound macaroni, break into small pieces, and cook in water, adding a little salt. When quite tender, strain off the water, place macaroni round a dish, and put the kidneys in the center, adding a little gravy. Garnish with two hard-boiled eggs cut into quarters, and four small tomatoes cut into small slices and fried. Serve very hot.

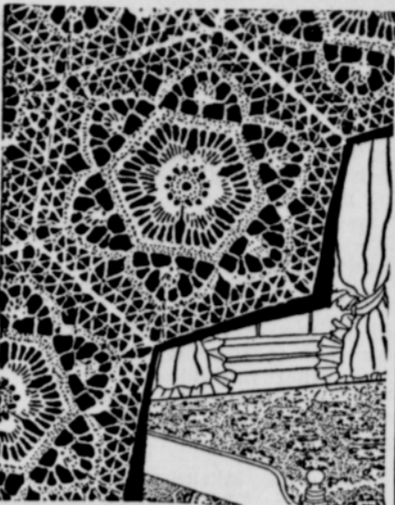
**To Prevent Scorching**—Leave one small section of a gem pan empty when putting gem batter in pan. Fill this section with water and gems will never scorch.

**Keeping Brassware Bright**—Brass ornaments will remain bright longer if, after polishing, they are given a thin coat of white shellac.

**Banana Toast**—Place sliced banana between two slices bread, spread with shortening. Place in baking pan in hot oven until lightly browned.

**Don't Scratch the Table**—If tiny squares of blanket or astrakhan cloth are stuck under the corners of your hand sewing machine it can be used on any table without fear of scratching it. Similar patches can also be used on clocks, or anything that stands on a polished surface.

## Lace Spread That Reflects Good Taste



Pattern 1443

A true reflection of your own good taste is this stunning open-work design, one easily achieved by crocheting simple, single medallions of string. A stunning dresser or table scarf, or perchance a cloth could also be your choice. It may be done in one or a combination of colors. Pattern 1443 contains detailed directions for making the 8 1/4 inch medallion shown and joining it for a variety of articles; illustration of it and of all stitches used; material requirements; color suggestions.

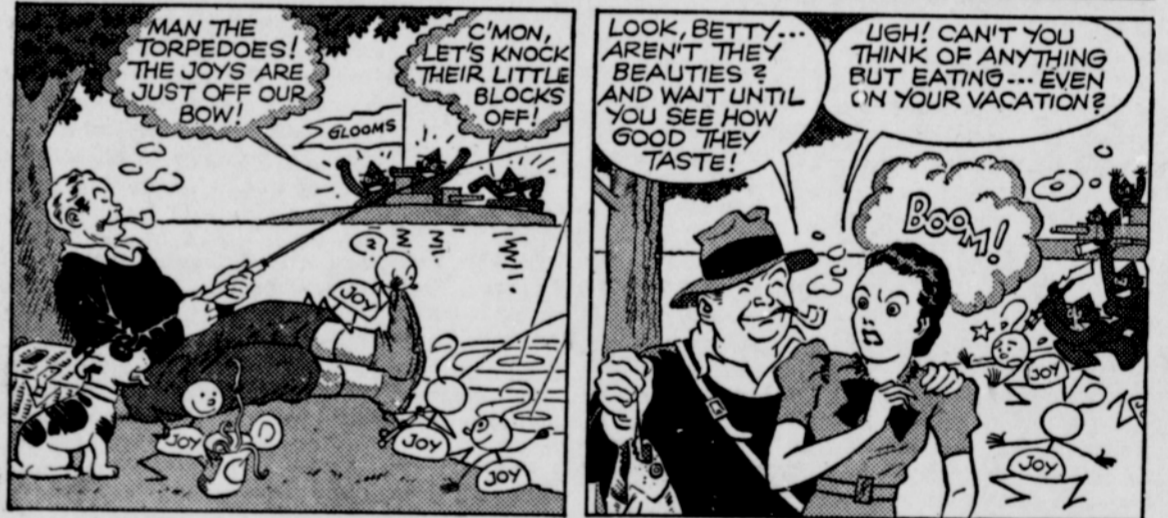
Send 15 cents in stamps or coins (coins preferred) for this pattern to The Sewing Circle Needlecraft Dept., 82 Eighth Ave., New York, N. Y.



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## JOYS and GLOOMS



"MAN THE TORPEDOES! THE JOYS ARE JUST OFF OUR BOW!"

"C'MON, LET'S KNOCK THEIR LITTLE BLOCKS OFF!"

"LOOK, BETTY... AREN'T THEY BEAUTIFUL? AND WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE HOW GOOD THEY TASTE!"

"UGH! CAN'T YOU THINK OF ANYTHING BUT EATING... EVEN ON YOUR VACATION?"

"IF YOU'RE SO FOND OF FISH YOU CAN CLEAN 'EM AND COOK 'EM YOURSELF... I'M NO HIRED GIRL!"

"THERE'S A LIMIT TO MY PATIENCE, BETTY. I'M SICK AND TIRED OF YOUR BEING SO CROSS ALL THE TIME."

"YOU WOULDN'T BE AROUND CHIRPING EITHER IF YOU HAD MY HEADACHE AND HADN'T SLEPT ALL NIGHT!"

"WELL, IF YOU'D LISTEN TO THE DOCTOR, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO BE SO GROUCHY ALL THE TIME!"

"THE DOCTOR TOLD YOU THAT YOUR HEADACHES AND SLEEPLESSNESS WERE CAUSED BY COFFEE-NERVES. WHY DON'T YOU TAKE HIS ADVICE AND TRY POSTUM FOR 30 DAYS?"

"OH, ANYTHING TO KEEP YOU QUIET!"

"30 DAYS LATER"

"YOU WOULDN'T KNOW SHE WAS THE SAME WOMAN NOW THAT SHE DOESN'T HAVE HEADACHES AND SLEEPS WELL!"

"RIGHT... SWITCHING TO POSTUM SURE MADE A NEW WOMAN OF HER!"

"YOUR MONEY BACK... IF SWITCHING TO POSTUM DOESN'T HELP YOU!"

If you cannot safely drink coffee... try Postum's 30-day test. Buy a can of Postum and drink it instead of coffee for a full month. If... after 30 days... you do not feel better, return the top of the Postum container to General Foods, Battle Creek, Michigan, and we will cheerfully refund the full purchase price, plus postage! (If you live in Canada, address General Foods, Limited, Cobourg, Ontario.)

Postum contains no caffeine. It is simply whole wheat and bran, roasted and slightly sweetened. Postum comes in two forms... Postum Cereal, the kind you boil or percolate... and Instant Postum, made instantly in the cup. It is economical, easy to make, delicious. You may miss coffee at first, but after 30 days, you'll love Postum for its own rich, full-bodied flavor. A product of General Foods.

**DON'T BE A GLOOM... DRINK POSTUM!**

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