

KITTY FREW

by JANE ABBOTT

SYNOPSIS: When Kitty Frew sees her husband's car parked outside Marge Crosby's house, she persuades herself that Gar is conferring with Marge's committee about their little theatre work. Though Gar's sister Carol has warned her of Marge's interest in Gar, Kitty is sure she can keep Gar happy in his home.

Chapter 31

GOODBYE, BUDGET BOOK

KITTY waited for Gar to tell her what the "committee" had done that afternoon. But he said nothing about it. He said nothing about his deal, or the bills, or why he had been absent from the office during the middle of the day.

He was in high humor and Kitty thought: "It's all right."

They talked about Sally and Phil. "We'll go to the wedding, won't we?" Kitty gave a little sigh of dismay. "Oh, dear, just when I thought we wouldn't have any extra expenses!"

"There you go!" Gar warned, laughing. "We'll make it, some way. Oh, say—" he changed the subject abruptly. "What do you think Carol's left home. Set up for herself in two rooms over a garage on Elmwood terrace. She's dotty."

"Gar, maybe she'll be happier, now."

Gar stared at Kitty. He made a sound of disgust. "Happier! What's the matter with her being happy at home? She's just plain crazy."

Kitty had an impulse to tell him of what she suspected between Carol and Somerset. But she checked it off sober afterthought. She knew Gar would feel no sympathy.

"What does your mother say?"

"What I say—that she's nutty. She's going in for arty stuff—selling Russian doo-dads." Kitty could not see Carol's move as Gar pictured it.

The next afternoon she went to Elmwood Terrace. She took a chance on following a man with a long packing box who might, she thought, be delivering a part of Carol's stock of "doo-dads." To her delight Carol opened a door to the man. She saw Kitty standing behind him.

"Oh, hullo! Wait a minute—" she signed the book the man gave her. "How did you know where I was?" Her greeting was not altogether gracious but there was a new excitement on her face and she stood aside for Kitty to enter the little hallway.

"Gar told me."

"Oh, he did, did he?"

Carol led the way up the narrow stairs, the big box across her arms. "I suppose he had a lot to say!"

Kitty was surveying the room she had entered. It was a pleasant room, with little window nooks at each end. It was in a confusion of boxes, half unpacked.

Carol put her burden down. "Well, I'm here!" She said it with a hard little note of triumph. "Isn't it a cute place? I'm going into business here, selling peasant dresses and Russian books and pictures. I'm getting out cards. I'll send you one. My friend, Nina Barikoff, is helping me. You don't know her, of course."

"I think it's splendid, Carol."

"Well, it's got to go." Carol frowned at the box which she was trying to open. "I've staked everything I own on it. I sold every bit of jewel, y I had and I've borrowed money, too—but not from my mother!" She threw back her head and leveled a sharp meaning glance on Kitty.

"I'm sure it will go! Perhaps Dorcas Taber—she's on the Times, you know—will give it a story."

"Thanks, you needn't bother to say anything about it to Gar's friends. I don't want them around. I wouldn't let Margery Crosby invade my door!"

Carol was thinking of Somerset, Kitty knew. If only she could win Carol's confidence—talk it out with her, tell her that Somerset wasn't worth her caring so!

"Let me help you unpack some of these boxes, Carol."

"They've got to be unpacked," Carol conceded.

"You see I know something about hanging stock away," Kitty laughed. "I was working in Stratton's all that time Gar thought I was in Bridgewater." It came to her that if she made confidences to Carol she might win Carol's in return.

Carol stared at her, amazed, across the brightly embroidered garment she had taken out of the box.

"I wanted to be independent until Gar began to work, you see."

"I don't see why you ever came back to Gar."

"Oh, Carol!" Kitty protested, laughing. "I never really left him—I was only waiting. And everything is beautifully all right, now."

"Oh, you think it is, do you?" "Why, of course!"

Kitty began to clear a table for some books. She took up a framed photograph which was lying there, face down. Carol snatched it out of her hand but not before Kitty had seen that it was Paul Somerset.

"I'll take care of that," Carol protested, coloring.

"Carol, I know you know Paul Somerset. I saw you with him one day, at Hoffman's."

"I'm all through with him!" Carol cried, passionately. But she held the photograph against her breast, her eyes belying her words.

Carol put the picture down with a little air of carelessness. "I told him if he wanted to let Marge Crosby make a fool of him—but she could not keep to the manner. Her lips began to quiver. "I said I was through with him but if he so much as crooked his little finger at me I'd go to him!"

"It was that way with me, Carol, about Gar, after those weeks," Kitty said simply, sympathetically. And the two girls looked at one another, a little solemnly, wholly friendly, now.

"Oh, well—" Carol caught up some books, handed them to Kitty. "Put these anywhere. We've made a good start. Another day and I'll be settled."

Kitty went home, rejoicing. She'd broken down Carol's indifference. They were friends.

She told Gar when he came home that she'd hunted Carol out.

But Gar wasn't interested in Carol or what she was doing.

When they sat down to their meal he scowled at the nicely browned chops.

"See here, Kit, you won't get sore, will you, if I lay down the law to you?"

She laughed at his preface in spite of the pang of alarm she felt.

"I don't want you to go market-ing the way you do. Mother told me—Mrs. Close told her—Carrying a basket. The least you can do is to appear to live like a lady—"

A great anger flooded Kitty so that she shook. His mother—how dared she talk to Gar of her, so!

Gar took her silence for agreement. He modified his tone. "Probably it didn't occur to you how it looked. But now you know how I feel about it."

He did not notice that she ate nothing, that her eyes were dark.

"I don't want you working like a housemaid, either, Kit. They have women here in the building who'll come in."

Following Gar's suggestion, Car-ley, a soft-voiced mulatto girl, was established in the apartment. She came each day at eleven o'clock and remained through dinner. Kitty ordered her days' needs by telephone. They were delivered at the service door.

She threw her budget book away. When her week's allowance was exhausted she charged what she had to get.

She spent her mornings curled on the divan, reading. Afternoons, she walked or shopped or went to Carol's. One day she telephoned to David and met him again for tea.

She dressed with elaborate care every evening for dinner. She'd bought two new dresses, a stock of undergarments, stockings, shoes, paying for them out of her precious savings.

She was very gay; when she and Gar went out with the "crowd" for dinner or to dance or to play bridge she was vivacious, lightning quick with witty retort, dazzling to poor Tubby.

She was very gay—and she was frightened, frightened at herself, at this mad recklessness that possessed her, at the burning anger she carried deep in her heart and smothered with laughter. She'd forget it, she had said to herself.

After a little she came not to resent Carley, in the kitchen, or to criticize her. "Being a lady isn't such hard work, even for me," she thought.

With Carol she could forget her hurt. She knew now that Carol liked to have her come to her rooms. Often they ate lunch together, frugally, at the end of the deal table on which Carol displayed some of her stock.

Sometimes Carol talked of Paul Somerset. She'd known him two years. It had been a clandestine acquaintance. "Do you think I'd take a chance on inviting him to the house?" she'd said bitterly. "I wasn't going to have him laughed at!"

They never talked of Gar or Mrs. Frew. If Carol began Kitty quickly changed the subject.

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David and Kitty stumble upon a surprise, tomorrow. And Kitty is afraid of herself.

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Shepherd Will Give Address in Phoenix For Baccalaureate

PHOENIX, May 14—(Sp.)—Sunday morning baccalaureate services will be held at the Presbyterian church with A. W. Shepherd giving the address. Special music is planned with the male quartet of the church singing.

Those graduating from Phoenix high school are: Winifred Inman, Doris Holmes, Alice Lowry, Alice Henzler, Nancy Johnston, Beth Parsons, Elaine DeVries, Anna Schrier, Mary Hight, Ray Maust, Ralph Swisher, and Walter Bois, and Cecil Swiggle.

The community is invited to this service.

listed at once. Os West, sponsor, announced today. The attorney-general has supplied the ballot title for the measure, and the campaign to secure the necessary 17,000 signatures was started.

Trio Confesses Douglas Thefts

ROSEBURG, Ore., May 14—(AP)—Theft of a moonshine still, five hives of bees, tractor and drag saw equipment, and hundreds of small articles in petty thefts committed in the northern part of Douglas county over a period of three years was admitted here today by Ben Cole and his son, Lloyd and H. K. Shook, all of Dodge Canyon, eight miles west of Oakland, according to Sheriff Jackson. The three men received jail sentences of one year each.

Pierce's Hothouse Tomatoes can now be had at your grocers. Remember they are vine ripened.

SALEM, May 14—(AP)—Petitions to place a measure providing for redistribution of motor vehicle charges on the November ballot will be circu-