

A PATH TO PARADISE

by Coningsby DAWSON

SYNOPSIS: At a momentous comedy Santa goes the friend of her former husband, Lou-Lou, whom she most detested. Lou-Lou is on the stage in the audience Santa finds Dicky himself. She thinks him for his elaborate birthday present—but later she quarrels with Clive, her second husband whom she adores.

Chapter 30 SANTA'S PROPOSITION

NEXT-morning Santa was unaccountably gay. Clive, on the contrary, was subdued. He was ashamed that they should have staged a scene on her birthday. They had formed the habit of having breakfast served on a tray. As a rule, she sat up, propped with pillows, and chatted while he dressed. When he was ready for departure, she thrust her feet into pantoufles and hung on a negligee, accompanying him to the hall to take farewell.

He had fetched her pantoufles and fitted them to her feet. She sat dangling her legs over the edge of the bed, regarding him.

"Don't go, Clive. Where do you go?"

"In search of work, along with the rest of the unemployed."

"Help me, Clive." She leaned her head on one side.

"I never realized till last night how bitterly you resent having nothing to do."

"It wasn't mentioned," he said.

"It never is. But it's the soreness that distorts everything."

He began to pace.

"For a man marriage isn't a career. Because you have money you seem to think it ought to be. At the moment I may be only a small potato. The little I earn or don't earn, what it makes much difference. What I am today I was when we married. You appeared to think me worth while—"

"I'm acknowledging all that," she nodded. "My mistake—But perhaps you haven't the patience to listen."

"Fire ahead," he consulted his watch.

"My mistake has been that I've been afraid to sympathize. Sympathy is so discouraging."

He planted himself at the foot of the bed.

"Was that the reason?"

"Hand me my comb; it's on the dressing-table. Why wouldn't it be the reason? Your future's mine."

Having presented her with the comb, he seated himself beside her.

"That's the truest word you've spoken since we were married."

"And you've been waiting to hear me speak it?"

"Stop tugging at your hair," he commanded. "This is the greatest moment of our lives. My future's yours! Why the dickens didn't you say it sooner? You've acted as though you wore the trousers and I had no future. I can fight now that I know it's for you I'm fighting."

"Don't need to," she threw him a tricky smile.

"Is there a nigger in the woodpile?"

"No nigger, little boy. Only that your wife's found you a job while you've been searching."

"Ha!" He considered. "How did you find it?"

"Someone asked me if you were free. This somebody estimates your ability very highly. No good asking his name; he doesn't want to figure. You're to go to an address that I'll give you. I don't mind telling you that the salary's twice what you were earning."

"I'm not worth ten thousand, Santa."

"You make me tired, Clive. You're worth what anyone will pay you."

"There must be strings."

"Only that you're not to ask who tipped me off to send you."

"Is he your father? Because, if so—"

"If so I should have broken our compact. No, he isn't my father. I haven't breathed a word to anyone that you're strapped. This offer came to me out of a clear sky."

"When?"

"That's my secret."

"But you know who's behind it?"

"I'm not even allowed to admit that. You're to go to a certain address. If you're not satisfied—"

"No harm in applying," he conceded.

Contrary to his usual reception, he was shown in at once. An alert, youngish man, probably ten years older than himself, rose to greet him.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Doncaster."

"I was given to understand," Clive began.

"Formalities aren't necessary. You're the executive in a thousand we've been looking for."

It sounded improbable, but Clive was sufficiently human to feel complimented.

"At the start I must appear foolish; I haven't an idea what will be my duties."

"We deal in securities. Work along lines similar to those of your late employers. Handle estates. Examine investments."

"But why you should have chosen me?"

"Does that matter? How about walking round to my club?"

It was an impressive lunch that his host ordered. Increasingly Clive suspected that he was being flattered. That there was a game he was convinced when the salary was mentioned—ten thousand dollars; the precise sum that Santa had stated.

"Then we may expect you tomorrow?" his host asked at parting.

"Let me sleep over it."

"As you like. I'd hoped you would decide at once."

"I don't want to appear ungracious," Clive hesitated.

"We'll consider no one else till we hear from you."

As his key turned in the latch Santa opened to him. She hailed him as a conquering hero.

"Hello, big shot! How does it feel to be important?"

"Like a fairy-tale. It would if I'd accepted."

"You mean you've refused?"

"I'm to give my answer tomorrow."

"But, Clive, you can't afford to be high-hat. Give it today. Everything will be settled."

"Guess I'll wait till tomorrow."

He escaped down the passage to the bedroom.

High-hat—good heavens! When it came to affording, he couldn't afford to be married. He conjured to himself what ten thousand dollars a year would mean to him; honestly, if he could earn it.

Why the secrecy? Santa could put him wise. With coaxing she would tell him.

Throughout dinner she didn't broach the subject. After dinner she played patience, while he feigned to read. The clock struck nine. She yawned and bundled her cards together.

"The end of a perfect day! And so to bed."

He glanced from his book as she pecked his forehead.

"What's wrong?"

"Nothing." She gazed down serenely.

"But there is. Why so much mystery? Having done me a good turn, you spoil it by treating me as an imbecile."

"Darling, you're nervously exhausted. You see the ghosts that ain't. When you've eluded that job tomorrow we must run down for a change to Atlantic City."

Kissing the tips of her fingers, she retreated.

He resumed his book, postponing the curtain-lecture which he felt sure awaited him.

In that she fooled him. At eleven when he retired she was peacefully sleeping.

According to routine, having breakfasted in negligee she accompanied him to the threshold. With the meekness of a saint she kissed him dutifully.

The door had closed. He tapped for re-entrance.

"What is it?" She stood facing him.

"This is absurd."

"I agree. You're too difficult for anything."

"You're the one who's difficult, Santa. You're trying to browbeat me into obeying you as though I were a kid in short pants. You know something you don't dare tell me?"

She stared back in dumb appeal.

"You don't dare tell me, because if you did I wouldn't accept."

She drew her wrap closer.

"And for your obstinacy there's only one reason: you hate to place yourself under an obligation to your wife."

He fumbled for words. "If a husband's always obeying his wife's orders, he never gets time to be himself."

"You've had two months with nothing to do but be yourself."

"Careful, Santa. That's a left-over from your first marriage."

"Again my first marriage!"

Tears filled her eyes. Without a backward look he darted for the elevator.

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Clive is shocked when he finds out, Monday, the source of his fine business offer.

GILMORE DEALERS AND GUESTS HEAR TRAVELER'S TALK

H. C. Boyd, traveler and lecturer, entertained a large gathering of Gilmore dealers and their families at the Hotel Medford Friday evening with a delightfully interesting and humorous travel talk and moving picture program. His diversified address and picture program included a visit to the principal points along the proposed International Pacific highway extending from Alaska to Central America as well as a side trip to the romantic and colorful Hawaiian Islands. Frank Parkhouse, secretary and assistant of Mr. Boyd, was also present and supervised the moving picture projection.

H. C. Boyd was introduced to the Gilmore dealers and guests by Chuck Ellis, district manager for the Gilmore Oil company. The audience, described by Mr. Boyd, was also present and supervised the moving picture projection. A short Gilmore film, of especial interest to the dealers, was also shown following the lecture and travel pictures. Gilmore representatives from all sections of southern Oregon included in Mr. Ellis' district, were present.

The lecturer devoted his time to

CHILDREN OFFERED PRIZES FOR BEST JASON LEE ESSAYS

The Oregon Historical Society has selected "Jason Lee" as the subject for the 1933 C. C. Beekman history prizes and medals. The prizes and medals are provided for in a fund bequeathed by C. C. Beekman, beloved pioneer Jacksonville citizen and banker. Four prizes are offered, the first, \$50; the second, \$50, the third, \$40, and the fourth, \$30. The four winners will also be accorded a bronze medal. The contestants are limited to boys and girls, between the ages of 15 and 18 years, attending a school in the state of Oregon.

The rules governing the competition are: (1) The essay submitted in competition must not exceed two thousand words in length. (2) The essay may be in handwritten or in typewritten form, preferably upon paper of commercial letter size, either ruled or unruled, the several sheets being numbered consecutively and written on one side only, with blank space of about one and one-quarter inches at top and left-hand margin. (3) The essay shall be accompanied by a separate sheet containing the name and post office address

CO-ED KILLS SNAKES HIDES ARE HER HOBBY

NORMAN, Okla.—(AP)—Miss Mary Grimes, freshman chemical engineering student at the University of Oklahoma, has a hobby unusual for a girl. She likes to collect rattlesnake skins. Her collection comprises more than 50 skins, most of them obtained in central Texas. She killed the snakes herself. The largest was four and a half feet long and had nine rattles.

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CORN FOR HEATING IS CHEAP AS COAL, IOWA TESTS PROVE

AMES, Ia.—(AP)—Burning corn in lieu of coal is no joke with Iowa farmers. It is so much a reality that the Iowa State college experiment station has made tests to discover its practicality, heating values, and comparison to coal, and has uncovered these facts: Iowa farmers can burn corn just as cheaply as Iowa coal, more cheaply than they can burn out-of-state coal, and much more cheaply than anthracite.

It may, the station points out, be more profitable to feed the corn to stock and market it as meat in the spring, or more convenient to sell corn and buy the coal. Nevertheless, the following figures on heating values are offered: One hundred and forty-one pounds of ear corn with 8 per cent moisture, has the same heating value as 100 pounds of Iowa coal—in other words 40 bushels of corn (70 pounds per bushel) is equal to a ton of Iowa coal. About 47 bushels of corn equal a ton of out-of-state coal.

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FREE—Pioneers and descendants photographed without charge for pioneer historical collection—SHANGLE STUDIO. Marshall-Smith-Leonard, cor. Main and Grove, have some good bargains in greeting cards. Drop in early for best selections.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Circumstantial Evidence!



BOUND TO WIN—The Conference



S'MATTER POP—Trouble Ahead



THE NEBBS—Convalescencing



BRINGING UP FATHER



JUNIORS' FROLIC GREAT SUCCESS

By Bobbie Ivanleva. The Junior High Frolic was an overwhelming success. The delightful program included: Dramatic club skit, "The Lighthouse Tragedy"; Glee club songs; Dramatic club act, "In School Days"; Glee club skit; dance medley by Frankie Rinsberger; Pop club dance review; minstrel show by football team. Popularity prizes were awarded to Carol Scheffel and Ben Hostmark. Grand prize was won by Lucille Wy-more. After the program, the evening was turned over to the various concessions.

CAP PISTOL FAILS IN HOLDUP BLUFF

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