

Buying Barbara

by Julia Cleff-Addams • Author of "YOU CAN'T MARRY"

SYNOPSIS: With her usual generosity, Mrs. Lodely writes Barbara Quentin at Kings Mallard asking that she pack and store the Lodely belongings. Mark Lodely and his mother are in London, where Farrell Arrington is spending much money to launch Mark as an artist. Farrell hopes that when he has made Mark sure, perhaps even cured his lameness, Barbara will break her engagement to Mark, and marry his benefactor. Barbara finishes packing, steps out a moment, and returns to find someone in the Lodely's former home.

Chapter 30
LEILA SPEAKS HER MIND
BEFORE Barbara had time to become frightened a cool voice said—"Hallo! There you are!" and Leila Cane came out into the hall.

"I've been to your rooms. Your landlady said you'd moved into your Toxeter house, but you just might be here. So I thought I'd chance finding you. I've come straight from London."

"Why?" asked Barbara bluntly.

"The uncertain light of the swinging oil lamp showed no flush on Leila's cheeks, but Barbara sensed that she felt repulsed.

"I didn't mean to sound snobby," she amended, though without haste. "Only I wondered what you could have to say to me that was so important." She caught her breath sharply. "There's nothing wrong with Mark?"

"Mark's in clover. . . . Have you dealt with all this junk by your belt?"

"Yes."

"Just like Mrs. Lodely to swing all on to you."

"That's not for you to say, Leila." Leila was unabashed. She turned back into the sitting room and eyed the fountain pen and the papers. She was dressed in the golden tan leather coat and hat in which she looked so supple and invulnerable and aloof. She picked up a large sealed envelope torn at the edges and weighed it absently in her hand.

"You forgot these, Barbara."

"No. There was no room. I must take them in a separate parcel. . . . Oh, that big envelope has split! I suppose there was too much in it."

Leila turned it over carelessly and it split further. It had been ridiculously crumpled.

"Barbara, I came down to urge you to do Patsy Raoul's house."

"I don't think you bothered to find me just to ask me that."

Barbara was scornful and because she was also tired to the point of collapse she let her scorn show. She began to put Mrs. Lodely's papers together, placing one ill-tied bundle upon the other. Leila's hand went out and stopped her.

"Barbara— She sounded almost moved, for Leila—"No used to be friends as children. Why do you hate me so?"

"I don't hate you," she protested "exactly."

"I think you do—exactly. And you've no reason. What is it you've got against me?"

"I suppose that I resent—whatever there is—between you and Mark."

"There's nothing between us now. And for what there once may have been, blame Mark as well as me!"

"Blame Mark?" Barbara said, her scorn intensifying. "How futile of you to push responsibility on to my poor Mark!"

Then she stepped back; back and back until a chair impeded her retreat. And step by step Leila, ablaze, pursued her.

"Your poor Mark! Why yours—why yours? He could have been happier! He would have been happier with me. You're lovely, in a picture book way, but you're never attracted to him as I have. He isn't your type of lover. Ah, you're offended by that! You think I've no right to say it!"

"You have less than no right. You're impertinent."

"And you're selfish!"

"Selfish—If . . . Leila, hadn't you better go?"

"You are selfish—selfish and proud. You made a promise when you were too much of a child to understand the nature of it and now it has become a matter of pride with you to keep your word. You never ask yourself if Mark is really happy in your care."

Barbara flung back her head.

"I don't need to ask myself. I ask Mark instead—and he tells me that he is happy and that he loves

me and that he wants us to marry!"

"Of course he tells you that, because you've made him believe it. Mark's lazy, Mark's cruel, and there's a side of Mark that makes him hold to you because with you he can be as lazy and cruel as he chooses. How do you know that with me he might not learn to be less crazy and less cruel?"

"Because," said Barbara, icy, unrelenting, "I saw a portrait he painted of you. He has never been so cruel to me as that!"

"Oh, Mark! Oh, Mark!" Leila's hands were flung out, as though she sought for help. Then she went stiffly back to the table, sat down and held her head.

Barbara's anger had vanished utterly. She, too, returned to the table.

"I'm terribly sorry I said that, Leila! Terribly ashamed!"

After a moment the muffled voice answered from under shielding fingers.

"You needn't be. I provoked you to it. Has anyone besides yourself seen it?"

"No," said Barbara without a quail. She added, coming closer—"It's destroyed now, absolutely obliterated. You can forget it—and everything to do with it."

"I'd like to tell you about—the portrait," said Leila, applying lipstick and powder-puff with careful precision.

"You needn't tell me, Leila."

"We were seeing a lot of each other. I think Mark wanted to fall in love with me; or perhaps he only wanted to feel free. He seemed to resent violently that he was not free; and yet he never contemplated for one instant giving you up. It was as if he—daren't."

"I'm not his jaller!"

"Are you sure you're not? Anyway, he was irked and restless and he took it out on me, but only, I swear, because he was irked. I don't naturally drive him to cruelty, as you do."

"It's useless, this kind of talk."

"No, not useless. It's part of what lies between us and it's time we had it clear. . . . Barbara, Mark and I decided at last—there was a fancy dress ball in town and we planned—"

"I've told you I don't want to know."

"And I've told you I want to tell. We left this hole of a place quite openly but I turned off the London road the other side of Toxeter and we went down to a little village I know on the South coast."

"He gave me an emerald pendant, a beautiful thing, set in platinum. But there was a girl there—a waitress—faintly like you and it broke Mark's mood. Next day he began to taunt me. I went off the deep end—I threw the emerald at him—we had a hell of a row and in the end I drove up to town, swearing he could stick alone there by the sea for the rest of his wicked life."

She bent and peered into the mirror in her bag and ran a finger-tip over the arches of her brows.

"After I'd been in London at the flat—a couple of weeks, he sent me a photograph. I gaped at it—at first I couldn't get the point at all. You see, I hadn't seen the portrait, then."

"It was a photograph of the portrait!"

"It was indeed!" Leila laughed—the old, mocking laugh, a little bitter, a little amused. "You've seen it, you'll know why I couldn't risk his showing it to anyone."

"He never would have shown it. He couldn't!"

"He couldn't? You know he'd have shown it to all Kings Mallard if it had suited him. No one would have believed that I hadn't sat for it. He had been making 'notes' of me for weeks, you see, and he evidently had had his sketch-book with him—and there's no doubt he has a wonderful memory. . . . Well, when I'd grasped the idea, I wired him—'How much?'"

"What? You—you dared?"

"Mark wired back—'Fifty.' He informed me afterwards that it barely covered his expenses in getting back here. He'd written to Mr. Frere for his fare home and that blessed old saint went himself by car and collected him."

Barbara gripped the table as though she had taken a blow over the heart.

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Barbara has an overnight guest, Monday.

BEGUM AGA KHAN MOTHER OF SON

PARIS, Jan. 18.—(AP)—A son was born today to the Begum Aga Khan, young and beautiful wife of the wealthy East Indian prince who is the religious head of millions of Islamic Mohammedans.

The child was born at the American hospital in the Neuilly district. Mother and son were reported doing well. The Aga Khan II., the father, is at Cannes on the Riviera.

He is the 48th indirect and unbroken descendant from the Prophet Mohammed's daughter, Fatima, and her husband, Ali. One of the most picturesque figures in Europe, the Aga Khan maintains extensive racing stables in India and England and plays an active role in Indian politics. The Islamic Mohammedans pay him annual tribute.

By a previous marriage, he has a 25-year-old son, Prince Ali, who makes his home in England.

The son born today was the first child of the fair-haired French woman, born of a bourgeois family, and the 57-year-old sultan sportsman. They were married three years ago.

Fender and body repairing. Prices right. Brill Sheet Metal Works.

Broken windows glazed by Trowbridge Cabinet Works.

Patronize Home Industry. Buy Whitelaw's Chocolates. Keep that money at home.

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—One By One The Bandits Fall!

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BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



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OREGON CAVES CO. OFFICERS REMAIN

Annual meeting of the Oregon Caves Heaters company was held Monday night in Grants Pass. The old board of directors and officers was re-elected, and George C. Sablin remained manager, the same board and manager having held office since the company was organized in 1923. Visitors at the caves during 1932 were fewer than 1931 by many thousands, but in comparison with other resorts there was a less percentage of decrease than the average.

The caves resort each year officially open on May 15 and closes October 15, although caretaker and guide are retained throughout the year. The bulk of the travel is from the latter part of June to and including Labor day.

Officers of the company are: Frank Mashburn, president; Sam H. Baker, vice-president; A. E. Voughles, secretary-treasurer; George C. Sablin, manager; L. M. Mitchell, director. Other stockholders are John Hampshire, Wilfred Allen and Dr. R. W. Stearns.

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