

SPITE MARRIAGE

By Katharine Hazard Taylor

SYNOPSIS: The one thing Marsha fears to have Bob know is that she has married him because she believed Geoffrey Tarleton married in another girl. And now Geoffrey has come to see her, and Bob has overheard the truth. Too late, Geoffrey realizes that Marsha has grown to love Bob far more deeply than she ever had cared for him.

Chapter 21 NO COMPROMISE

PERHAPS three minutes after Marsha had dropped to the stool near the fire, she heard Geoffrey Tarleton's car start, its motor growl and then, with distance, dim and fade to nothing. Shock had imbued for her every faintest sound with a force and an unnatural intensity.

She raised her head to glance around the room wherein she had found new life and the code she needed. The tranquillity of the room mocked her. The tranquillity now was one of the lies she had once thought necessary for the existence of any beauty. It was not true; it only seemed.

She heard a dull descending tread upon the stairs and she rose quickly to wait, tense, trembling. Bob entered the room to move toward her. His awkwardness, his palor and his blank eyes told her something of how deeply he had been hurt; she felt the smart of tears in her eyes. She had entreated the vague, far something to keep her from having any part in hurting him. And she knew suddenly that his suffering mattered more to her than ever could hers; or rather, that it was more truly hers than could be her own.

"Bob," she appealed. He looked at her but a moment, and then away. He answered after a long-stretched, pulsing minute with, "Well?"

"Will you listen to me, Bob, and believe me?" she questioned. "How can I, Marsha? I—" he floundered, paused.

"I am going to speak the truth," she stated in a voice that broke. "I want the truth!" he said loudly. He drew a deep breath. "Answer this question. Had you decided to marry me before you thought Geoffrey Tarleton was married?"

"Bob—"

"Had you?" There was an awing insistence and weight in his tone; hearing it, her face grew more white than it had been. She faltered, she became confused, she felt her last chance for happiness slipping from her because she could not lie as she had before knowing him.

He repeated his question; she stammered, in answer. "No, Bob, no, but I— you must believe me— Bob!" she ended, but she could not soften him with any frantic appeal, nor, with appeal, keep him near.

He had turned to move toward the door; she heard him cross the hall to mount the stairs. She closed her eyes to shut out the whirling of every object in the room. There were curious and disturbing black spots in the air too.

When she opened her eyes she saw her world as steady, but the new, numbed normal was worse than had been the sudden onslaught of sickness. She drew a deep breath, in an effort to dispel the drawn feeling that oppressed her lungs and that cramped her heart, but found no ease.

"CURIOUS," she thought, "how physical this is." And yet, she reflected further, she had learned through Bob that blend of flesh and spirit that makes perfection. That perfection that was now gone, of course. And perhaps some day she would see Geoff's "drooping in" as amusing. "No," she said half aloud, "it will never be amusing."

She found herself straightening the turned-up corner of a rug. That was strange to do. But one kept on with the absurd, small, meaningless motions; squatters in a cage. She gathered in her palms some rose petals that had dropped to the top of the piano, roses Bob had brought her. She dropped these to a basket. She had never liked to toss them to the leaping flames. . . they seemed, somehow, still alive.

What strange paths a mind would follow, if loosed from the leash, she thought. Here she was thinking about rose petals with surface thoughts and in the deep still pool of the mind which never sleeps and never rests was the feeling of finality; the knowledge that it was over, that Bob was suffering.

She settled in a stiff-backed chair from which she could see the stairs.

"Of course," she decided loudly. "I didn't deserve any more and I might have known—I did know—it couldn't last. But it does seem strange to feel as I have and then to know that it, with everything else, leads only to deeper dark."

Again she breathed deeply; but the breath did nothing to release the stricture in her breast.

She moved. She had heard no stir from overhead; listening was becoming an ache. She rose and, hesitantly, she made way toward the door. She crept up the stairs slowly, silently.

At the top she paused. Through a doorway she saw Bob throwing his things on the bed, shirts, underwear, ties, the brushes which still looked strange to Marsha on the old-fashioned bureau top, near her; the lounging robe that had contrasted amusingly with the soft and feminine garments she wore during resting hours.

After a moment he turned, perhaps feeling her eyes. "Come in," he invited, "we must talk a little; but don't let's row if we can help it. Perhaps we can infuse even this situation with a sort of dignity, keep it from being more sordid than it is."

"Did you didn't know Geoffrey Tarleton's younger brother was married. Everyone talked of it. We heard it even in our house—had to—and my mother and I don't encourage gossip."

Marsha dropped to the foot of the chaise longue: "We" now meant Bob and his mother; "We" was now a duet, not a trio. Curious how it hurt, she mused. For she had realized that the marriage would end, from the first.

Bob went on. "Tarleton's brother was still in college, I understand; the girl was at the switchboard of some hotel exchange. And the old people didn't like it; they were rather badly cut up over it, I was told. Tarleton, the boy scout, reconciled them. Sorry if I'm a trifle bitter at moments, Marsha."

She said nothing. He had spoken in jerks as he assembled his apparel; assembled it slowly, somewhat stupidly and in a way that revealed the shock which still gripped him.

"Of course you can have a divorce," he stated. "We'll manage it, somehow."

"I don't want," she began. Breath faltered. "I don't want a divorce," she managed to say, when she saw he meant to speak.

His "I do," was matter-of-fact in the extreme, flat and loud. "You see," he continued, "this has changed it. . . the person I thought you were, was a dream. I never loved a woman who could give herself entirely to a man in order to avenge her sense of wrong. I never—but there's no need of talking about this."

He picked up a leather case, fitted in it some brushes, and then hunted a spot for the case in his bag. She looked at him miserably as he bent above his bed. . . lean, tall, thin. His narrow face now set and harsh; his bronzed skin looking as if it were stretched over dead white plaster.

"I've changed," he said. "It looked like," he commented through set teeth, "as I came in and saw you in that—that—" he had to stop. She saw the color heighten that had been driven to his cheeks by anger. It receded; he managed to speak again and calmly, "Saw you in—Tarleton's arms," he ended. "He lost his head," she said hotly. "I hated it. I did, Bob, I did; I don't lie!"

"How about that evening when you said you loved me and that you would marry me? You loved me that evening? Don't ask me to believe that, now. I keep remembering how I felt. I was a beholder of miracles when I found myself accepted by you, the one girl who ever counted. Do you remember how you said 'I do care!'"

She began to sob brokenly, to protest, to explain, to entreat. And she achieved nothing.

She saw him unsteadily through the rise and fall of tears. He said, "I hoped we could avoid this." She turned away and groped along the hall.

At five he approached to offer her help with packing, and she found his gentleness more trying than his condemnation. "I'd be glad to help," he stated, his eyes fastened on the wall above her head. "I remember you said you didn't like packing. And I'm not a bad packer."

Tomorrow, Bob and Marsha begin their new, and terrifying life.

GEARY MARSHALS HEALTH HEADS IN FIGHT ON CANCER

In furtherance of the cancer control campaign of the American Society for the Control of Cancer, Arthur M. Geary, a Portland attorney, formerly a resident of Medford, with Mrs. Geary has been visiting here for the last two days. He has called upon officers of the Jackson County Medical Society and of the health department, to secure their co-operation in the cancer control campaign. Recently, Mr. and Mrs. Geary returned from a trip to Europe, their itinerary including portions of England, France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Italy.

Mr. Geary is a son of the late Dr. Edward P. Geary, pioneer physician of Medford and southern Oregon, who was a former mayor of Medford. For the last year and a half Mr. Geary has served as lay president for the Oregon branch of the American Society for the Control of Cancer. "Jackson county is surely to be congratulated upon the splendidly equipped offices of the health department in the court house and upon the educational and other work being conducted throughout the county," states Mr. Geary.

"The educational campaign material issued from time to time by the American Society for the Control of Cancer has ready dissemination," continued Mr. Geary, "through a health department such as is found here in Jackson county."

"From the data assembled by the

American society, the fact is clear that certain types of cancer are readily controlled when diagnosed early and scientifically treated. There probably is no scourge of mankind that calls for more prompt diagnosis and action than cancer. Cancer today ranks second to heart disease in the cause of death. Ten per cent of the deaths in the United States are attributed to cancer.

"Amid the turmoil in Europe over economic, political and military questions, scientists are making a vigorous effort to curb the ravages of cancer. Anyone traveling in Great Britain is impressed by the widespread propaganda and education directed toward early diagnosis and prompt scientific treatment of cancer. The British press tells of contributions to the Empire Cancer Control program being made by rich and poor throughout the country, even by 'society' as in the derby. Similar campaigns are found in most of the European countries."

"In the United States the American Society for the Control of Cancer for a number of years has been spreading educational propaganda calculated to lessen death by cancer. Dr. Clarence C. Little, former president of Michigan university and a noted biologist, is the managing director of this society. On its board are leading physicians and surgeons who have made a special study of cancer."

"The American society and its state-wide branches work entirely in harmony with the established medical societies in spreading information as to symptoms of cancer that are recognizable by laymen and that call for immediate attention by family physicians."

Oil released from the deepest wells of the Kettleman hills field in California has been found to expand to about 120 times its original volume when brought to the lower atmospheric pressure at the surface.

ARMY NEEDS MEN VANCOUVER POST

Maj. W. R. Mann, U. S. army recruiting officer, 323 postoffice building, Broadway and Gilman streets, Portland, Ore., announces that he has authority to make original enlistments for the 7th United States Infantry, stationed at Vancouver Barracks, Washington.

An organization of which the army is justly proud, the 7th Infantry has written some of the brightest pages into the history of the United States. It is one of the oldest and most famous regiments of the army. Vancouver Barracks, the home of the 7th, has a desirability of location equaled by few army posts throughout the United States.

Situated in the heart of the city of Vancouver, Wash., it is only "35 minutes from Broadway," the center of Portland's business district, and less than ten minutes walking distance from Janzen Beach, one of the north-west's finest pleasure parks.

GOOD JAIL MEALS LURED TRANSIENTS MANHATTAN, N. Y.

Chief H. B. Peery learned why so many transients come to his jail. Chick marks about town could be translated by those who knew how to read them: "Swell grub at jail." Peery announced that hereafter only bread, bologna and water will be jail fare.

The mere odor of cedar in cardboard boxes and closets does not protect clothing from moths, according to department of agriculture entomologists.

SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



FRED PERLEY, WHO LAST YEAR CALLED THE POLICE TO INVESTIGATE LIGHTS IN ERNIE PLUMER'S SUPPOSEDLY EMPTY HOUSE, NOT KNOWING THAT ERNIE HAD UNEXPECTEDLY RETURNED, DOESN'T BELIEVE IN MAKING THE SAME MISTAKE TWICE. SO LAST WEEK WHEN LIGHTS WERE SEEN DURING THE PLUMERS' ABSENCE, HE PERSUADED THE NEIGHBORS NOT TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, AND THE THIEVES MADE A PRETTY GOOD HAUL, AND ERNIE'S BOILING MAD ABOUT IT

7-27

By C. M. Payne

'MATTER POP-



TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Woman In The Case Appears



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Cap'n Ike Backtracks



THE NEBBS—Keep a Stiff Upper Lip



BRINGING UP FATHER



THE NEBBS—Keep a Stiff Upper Lip



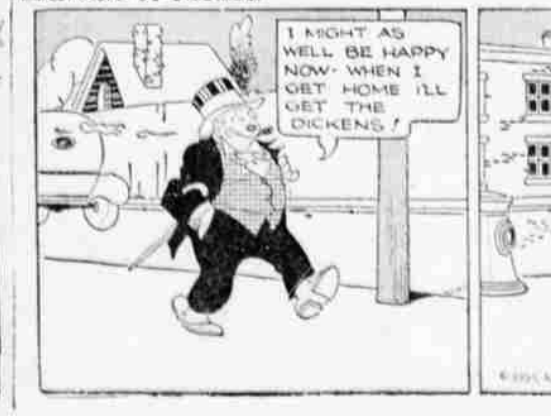
BRINGING UP FATHER



Jaw of Dinosaur Skeleton Is Found
HARLEM, Mont.—(UP)—A dinosaur skeleton has been found on a farm on Thirty Mile creek north of here. Only the jaw is exposed. Darwin Harbicht, well known paleontologist, estimated the jawbone is from 25 to 30 feet long. Plans are afoot to excavate the remainder of the huge beast which roamed Montana in pre-historic days.

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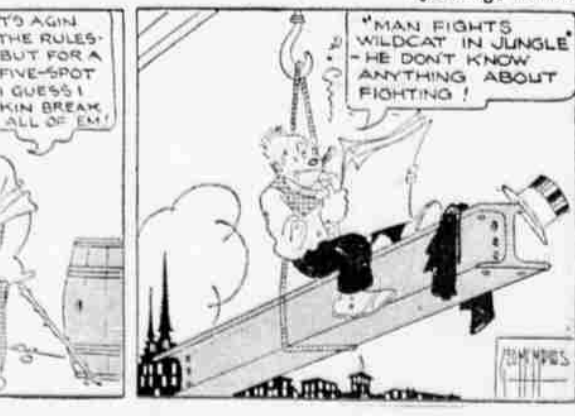
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