

SPITE MARRIAGE

by Katharine Hamilton Taylor

SYNOPSIS: Bob Powers' mother is ill of an incurable disease, and Marsha, Bob's wife, is in New York caring for her. Mrs. Powers' illness has postponed the divorce that Bob had demanded. Marsha, who had been a nurse, is now a housewife. Bob, who had been a doctor, is now a writer. The story tells of their relationship in the past and their dependence on his mother. Bob is in Mexico at work.

Chapter 23

SELF-SACRIFICE

"YOU will never know," said Marsha "what your faith in me, and your caring for me, means to me; will always mean to me!"

Her voice broke; she saw Mrs. Powers' eyes fill and she spoke quickly, lightly, of other matters. Marsha's first thought now was for Mrs. Powers and for that which was good for her; she was learning that lesson of love which makes the needs of others one's own.

She had new eyes, and they told her that Mrs. Powers was helped by seeing her on those sleepless nights when pain kept vigil and that Mrs. Powers' knowing the nurse to be awake and alert was not the same.

The fact warmed Marsha, who felt from it a rise of tenderness that made her eyes sting; an almost maternal tenderness. She reflected often and gratefully on the fact that she was, "so absurdly strong" and, feelingly, she raised upon the mercy of crowded hours and the weariness that sent her soon into sound and dreamless sleep.

The loss that she would know with Mrs. Powers' going, a loss that must come to Marsha who had before known nothing of gentle and real affection, would have crippled her had she had more time to brood upon it.

As it was—by day there were trips up and down stairs, domestic matters to attend to in the house, ordering to do, the doctor to see, beside the odd, inexpressible extras that took time.

Such, for instance, was the call of Mrs. Powers' old friend, Mrs. Vining, who always stayed a round two hours. There were checks to write or the family attorney might come or the Curate or the Rector. And flowers must be arranged and Mrs. Powers must be diverted, entertained—and Bob's letters must be written every two days.

Many were the worlds for Marsha, who had known but her own selfish and sometimes cruel world; and there was so much to do in each of them.

Day done, Marsha would creep into the high, black walnut bed to sleep soundly for an hour, perhaps two; to wake with compunction and to fumble thickly for her elixir sippers.

Then, a negligible around her, she would make shivering, stumbling way down the passage. If the light by Mrs. Powers' bed showed a yellow slit beneath the door, Marsha would blink herself to sharp wakefulness and push open the door.

"Pain, dearest!" she would ask anxiously. "We can do no more than so much!" the weary doctor had admitted to Marsha; "the effect of opiate wears away with this!"

She would see Mrs. Powers smile on her, her eyes brighter; she would hear, "Just a little, dear."

SHE would settle by the bed; sometimes Mrs. Powers admitted that she would have to have "a little pellet" and when this happened Marsha would drop it in a glass of water. The she would slip her arms beneath Mrs. Powers' shoulders to lift her while she drank.

After that she would sit down by the bed to wait, watch and hope; to hope so fully, so fervently, that she was often drained by the energy she gave to hope.

"Please, please!" she petitioned silently of that vague something that was drawing closer and growing warm for Marsha; "Please keep pain from her!"

"You'll get cold, dear," Mrs. Powers would murmur.

Marsha would answer with a convincing, "I'm quite warm," frequently when her hands were stiffened by the cold and she had to set her teeth to keep them from chattering.

"Will you, just to gratify me, wrap that comforter around you?" "If you like, but I'm not cold. Is it any better, dear?" "I think so."

And then again, she'd sit back to wait. It was at such times that she felt oddly close to Bob; quite as if his strength sustained her, as if his love encompassed her, as if everything were well between them, and as if he cared.

And one night as she sat in the chill, dimly lit room she fell asleep to wake with a start and a sob because she had heard Bob say, "My dearest dear! My poor, tired child!"

It had made her tremble violently. "You spoke, mother?" she faltered.

"Water, dear, please." She stumbled as she moved toward the table upon which was a pitcher, but the ache and the depression that had rooted in an unusually long and trying day, were gone.

Bob must not know how bad it was, she decided again and again; he must never know! When he returned, she must keep him from the room at the bad hours. She considered, and at length, ways of doing this. She decided that she could with the help of the servants and the nurse, who would certainly understand the futility of his having more hurt than must be his.

"You'll break down," said the nurse one morning that followed a sleepless night; "it'd just a whim of hers, wanting to see you; it'll wear you out!"

For a brief moment a little of Marsha's chill arrogance returned; "Never suggest to her, please, my being there! Do you understand, Miss Throp?"

"Yes, Mrs. Powers, I didn't mean to annoy you, but you're too selfless."

"Nor did I mean to be sharp. But I want to be with her, to do everything I can for her! And if she thought I was being worn down, it would make it too difficult, you see?"

THE nurse did see, but she did not cease to be troubled. She released pressure through angry mutters to Hannah, to Ellen; mutters in which she said, "She's wearing herself out! That's all! The human body won't stand more than so much. When's he coming back anyway? She's a saint and—"

But Marsha was finding new food as well as new fatigue through doing what she could for "mother."

The diversion she best liked was looking, with Mrs. Powers at Mrs. Powers' many portraits and snapshots of Bob. Bob in the photographer's high chair, Bob in his first short dresses, Bob wearing his first sailor-suit with the real whistle of which he had been so proud, hanging from a cord that was around his neck.

Bob in military-school uniform, later, in college and on the crew; Bob at some picnic. (The girl seated by him was really beautiful, Marsha realized with a chilling of heart.) Bob with his father, that happy year they spent together abroad.

Under this heading too, came Bob's dogs; horses; the Adirondacks place. "Of course you will go there often with Bob," said Mrs. Powers; "Bob loves it—"

And Mrs. Powers' life ending, Marsha was certain, was the very reason why she would never go with Bob to the Adirondacks place. His loving it would, of course, wall it away from her.

All that faded, wasted, small women had been to Bob began to be too apparent to Marsha and it led her to write him, in extra letters which Marsha did not show to Mrs. Powers, every small detail concerning his mother which she felt could interest him; his mother's enjoyments; how she spent her time; what they were reading; of her appetite, (if good, that day) who had called upon her. The chronicle was faithful in narrating all that could cheer.

Marsha felt that such word would help him; but once and again doubt crept in through her weariness, which reduced her judgment and left her certain only of the fact that she loved two souls with all her heart and must live, in the chill future, without both of them.

She wrote, one doubtful day, when her head ached from lack of sleep and she could not see quite clearly.

"I have written as I have, thinking it might help you. If my extra letters annoy you, put parentheses about 'Your letters are so long and good, dearest' and I'll understand that you wish a terse report and no more."

"I don't want to make things harder for you than they must be; and I thought you might, and most naturally, feel I intrude where I can't belong through telling you of your mother."

"The only thing I could not forgive is your letting me continue to annoy you, if I have."

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Marsha has, tomorrow, a telegram from Mexico.

HOOVER'S BOOK TO EMPHASIZE PERIL IN REGIMENTATION

NEW YORK, Aug. 10.—(UP)—"National regimentation" and bureaucracy are endangering the entire structure of America's liberty, former President Herbert Hoover will say in the book he has just completed under the title of "The Challenge of Liberty," it was announced today.

The book will represent Hoover's first significant utterance since he left the White House two years ago to make way for the Roosevelt "new deal." It will be published late next month by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Hoover, who has worked on the manuscript during the last year, will set forth his defense of "the American system" of government. He will give critical consideration to the growth of fascism, communism and socialism.

He will discuss his general purposes in a foreword, in which he declares:

"It is the purpose of this examination to survey briefly the movement of revolution through the world since the great war the method of overthrow of liberalism; to recall our American heritage, the growth of our liberty, the forces in human nature and human behavior which govern economic life, the restraints and ideals of the system. Of ordered liberty, the achievements of the American system; to analyze from an American point of view the alternate systems

of society; to examine our own abuses of liberty; to review the purposes of American life; to consider constructively, not a detailed program, but the method through which alone we can solve national problems."

The publishers said the ex-president's book will be divided in to 11 parts under the following principal chapter headings:

"Revolutions from liberty, our American heritage, the utility and ideals of liberty, the accomplishments of the American system, alternative philosophies of society and government, national regimentation, the consequences to liberty of continued regimentation, the constructive methods of liberty, the abuses of liberty, economic stability and security."

Hoover, unlike many statesmen, has done little private writing. He is listed as the author of "American Individualism," published in 1922, but he is better known for his joint translation, with Mrs. Hoover, of "Agricola de re Metallica."

EMERGENCY EDUCATION SUPERVISORS NAMED

SALEM, Aug. 10.—(UP)—Kenneth Beach of Roseburg and Mrs. Sarah V. Case of St. Helens were appointed on the staff of the state department of education for the federal emergency relief program in education, it was announced today by Charles A. Howard, superintendent of public instruction, through his offices here.

Beach was named general adult educational supervisor, while Mrs. Case will be supervisor of nursing and parent education. Both have been connected with school work for some time.

ENGINEERS TOLD ABOUT HIGHWAYS FOR HEMISPHERE

VANCOUVER, B. C.—(UP)—Highways that eventually will link the entire western hemisphere, were described in papers read before the highway and construction division of the American Society of Engineers convention here.

Details of the Alaska-United States highway, which will stretch 2204 miles north of Vancouver and the Inter-American highway, linking the United States with Central America, and which eventually will be extended to South America, were given by American engineers.

The proposed Inter-American highway, which will cross seven countries and pass through seven capitals in linking up the United States and Central America, is the longest ever surveyed and planned, it was revealed. It will skirt volcanoes, penetrate jungles and open areas now practically inaccessible.

Roads already in existence will be utilized and, like the Alaska-United States highway, it will, when completed, be of historic, economic and social significance.

The Alaska-United States highway project will be about 2204 miles long.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Aug. 9.—(UP)—With her clothing in flames, Mrs. Bertha Deutsch, 42, was hurried, bound and gagged, from a motor car early today, after two men had kidnaped her some time before. Hospital attendants said her condition was not serious.

SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



ON A BLISTERING HOT NIGHT WHEN THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD WAS FORCED TO SEEK SLEEP ON VERANDAS AND SLEEPING PORCHES, MILT GRIGSBY SHORED SO LOUD THAT NOBODY ON THE STREET COULD GET TO SLEEP

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GLUYAS WILLIAMS

S'MATTER POP—



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Impulsive Inspector!



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HAL FORREST

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Luke Leads



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THE NEBBS—The Transformation



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BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus

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GEORGE MCMANUS

Sneezers Sought To Test Theory

CHICAGO (UP)—The University of Illinois college of medicine has started an elimination contest to find the 10 Illinois women with the most irritating sneezes. The women are

wanted for use in determining whether electrical changes in the air may be one cause of chronic asthma.

Ref. Evelyn Marshall, missionary of the National Federation of Spiritual Science churches, gave lecture Sunday, 8 p. m., at 315 So. Riverside Subject, The New Revelation.

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