

# SPITE MARRIAGE

by Katharine Hawland Taylor

Chapter 42  
ILLNESS

WITH a murmured response Bob settled; he saw, with a tightening of heart, that Marsha's place at the table was undisturbed. Perhaps she would appear soon.

Bartholomew left the room; Bob looked at Marsha's empty chair to see her face as he had seen it the night before. She had seemed a little girl from the wild fear that had filled her eyes and her stammered explanations that had told him nothing. Why had he said that about her pretending his mother gave her this, that? What particular devil had prompted those words?

He glanced quickly away from her chair and toward the sunny windows. A bowl of jossquills in the center of the table echoed the outside light with a yellow glare. One window, slightly raised, admitted a faint, small breeze, which carried the promise of the warmer days that were to come. With the mood, and the heart for it, one would know spring had come, Bob realized.

He tried to eat and failed. He was grateful to her, he decided, as he pushed away his hardly touched coffee cup, for not coming down. If he only could get beyond seeing her as she had looked! Beyond remembering that panic in her eyes, beyond feeling her sob as she had, in his arms!

Bartholomew stood near, crestfallen from knowing another disappointment. Affairs were obviously far from being as he had hoped! Mr. Robert had no more than touched his food and his face was gray and strained.

"Has Mrs. Powers breakfasted?" Bob questioned abruptly.  
"No, sir; I presumed, Mr. Robert, that she had slept late and would breakfast in her room. I had hoped that she was getting enough over the shock, sir. She worked steadily and hard these last, long months. Night on night up."  
"But the nurses?" Bob prompted sharply.

"Yes, sir. But your mother wanted her, Mr. Robert. And she knew it. And she answered every want and need of your mother's without a word of complaint and when Hannah or Ella or I would remonstrate, sir, she always answered with, 'But I want to be with Mrs. Powers; I could be nowhere else if she needed me!'"

"Hum," Bob murmured.  
"And Mrs. Powers, it meant everything to her, Mr. Robert, if I may go on?"  
"Go on," Bob prompted heavily.  
"Mrs. Powers said one day to me, she said, 'We knew, didn't we, Bartholomew, that Mr. Robert would marry someone like our dear child?' and I agreed, as one must knowing her, your wife, sir. That was the day Mrs. Powers gave your wife the pearls."  
"God!"  
Bartholomew stiffened; perhaps, he reasoned, he had gone a bit too far. "I beg pardon, Mr. Robert?" he said unsteadily.  
"It's nothing, Bartholomew. Will you fill my glass, please?"  
Bartholomew filled the glass; Bob drank deeply from it and rose.

WHEN he reached the upper hall he found Hannah, a disturbed Hannah, stepping from Marsha's room.

"Mr. Robert," he heard.  
"Yes, Hannah."  
"Mrs. Powers is not at all well this morning, Mr. Robert. I just now ran her tub for her and as she was very unsteady, I touched her skin as I put her negligee around her. She's afebrile with fever and I thought perhaps we'd best have Doctor Jackson in."

"I'll call him, Hannah, thank you. Mrs. Powers you say is bathing now?"  
"Yes, Mr. Robert."  
He turned into his own room; with her return to her room from the bathroom which adjoined it, he would hear her. And meantime, with a view of understanding Marsha better and so, perhaps, giving her more justice, he would open the box.

He stepped into his room, closed the door after himself; locked it. The box opened readily. Bob took from it a miscellaneous assortment that made his eyes smart and his throat stiffen. Every small marker that had had to do with him, in all changing boy-to-manhood eras, had been preserved, neatly ticketed and with Mrs. Powers' Spencerian writing upon every tab.

He had had a strangely apologetic feeling about opening the box and touching its contents. But the key had been sent him with the word that there were things in the box for which he would care. Well, he did care for them, and it hurt to care.

The younger, rounder writing of his boy-written letters gave him another, even deeper pang. He had dreamed then, with enchanting innocence, of marrying some nice girl and of being very happy.

He had never dreamed, he could not have dreamed then, he realized, that he could marry, as he had, to be acutely unhappy and that he would (through the "nice girl") lose self control, go to pieces, hurt her and himself as he had the night before.

Quite as well that the future was shrouded, for to suffer before a tragedy as well as after would be a bit more than any man could bear.

Why had Marsha tried to pry the box open? Why had she meddled with a thing that was, so obviously, not to be meddled with? How had she dared?

As he looked at the collection he felt anger against her rise again. Possibly, he thought hotly, she would have been amused at the collection... amused, if she had succeeded in picking the lock.

He frowned as he wondered over her reason, and then he saw and picked up a little folded sheet of his mother's stationery. She had always clung to her mourning and a narrow black line edged her paper. It opened it with interest and the feeling of the imminent disclosure of a secret. It was evident that his mother had written the few lines in haste.

"I want you to take Marsha back with you," he read. "It may not seem to you, as you read this, wise, but it is my wish. My disapproval of modern separation is entire and I have gained from atmosphere, that you and Marsha consider it."  
"For my sake, and because much wrong may be righted in the space of a year, I am going to ask you to take Marsha with you, wherever you may go for that space of time, and to give her what chance you can, and every opportunity, to show to you the affection that she bears you."  
"I think no woman could love you more."

THAT was the end of the message which had, evidently, been written in haste and with some considerable emotion.

So she had known, and Marsha had known that his mother's appeal was in the painted box.

He opened Marsha's door. She sat up in her bed as he moved toward her. He saw right in her eyes; did she think he was going to belabor her again?  
"Please, please!" he begged "don't be afraid of me, Marsha!"  
"I'm not, truly!" she assured him, a trifle unsteadily, and she lay back.

By the bed he stood looking down on her; he was alarmed by the flush on her cheeks and by the brightness of her eyes which were raised to his. He ventured to lay a hand on her forehead.

As Hannah had said, she was "afore with fever." She drew a little away; he moved to settle on a small chair that stood near.

"Marsha—"  
"Yes!"  
"It's difficult for me to say all I feel. I've never been so deeply ashamed, if that's anything in the way of apology. I don't know that it is."

Again she sat up. "It's all right, really. It doesn't matter. As you said, a great many men have kissed me. I don't know why it hurts me. But I didn't expect you to when I didn't want you to. But it doesn't matter."  
"It matters rather terribly to me, Marsha."  
She looked at him vaguely. "I put the pearls and the bracelet on my dressing table top," she said.

"Marsha," he stretched an appealing hand toward her. "I didn't mean that I know my mother gave them to you. I want you to have them."  
"No, I couldn't really. I'm so sorry. I don't want to hurt you, but I couldn't. And I know that she gave them to me and that's all that matters; I don't care about having them... all I need is the feeling that she wanted to give them to me... and she did!"  
She dropped back again, and turning a little from him she hid her face in the crook of her arm. He saw her shoulders shake.

"Oh, Marsha, please!" he begged frantically, voice roughened.  
(Copyright, 1934, by K. Hawland-Taylor)  
Bob tells Marsha about the note, Monday.

## NEEDY FAMILIES URGED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SERA CANNING DEPOTS

Relief cases are again reminded to take advantage of the SERA food preservation program carried on through the Jackson County relief committee in various parts of the valley. Beans, tomatoes and other vegetables, meat, fish and fruit are the products being canned.

Needy families are urged to make appointments, if eligible under the relief rules, at their nearest kitchen. Families uncertain of their eligibility should report to the relief committee headquarters on the third floor of the city hall.

Canning kitchens are located at the Medford armory, where operations are underway six days of each week; at the Ashland armory, six days of every alternate week; at the Eagle Point grange hall Thursday, Friday and Saturday of every alternate week, and at the Rogue River community center, on the same days.

Mrs. Effie Birney is supervisor at Medford, Mrs. Mae Davis at Ashland, Mrs. Rita Meyers at Eagle Point and Mrs. Elizabeth Fowler at Rogue River.

## CIVIL SERVICE NEEDS MAN TO FEED PRESS

The United States civil service commission has announced an open competitive examination as follows:

## ROYAL KIDNAPING THREAT IS DENIED

LONDON, Aug. 21.—(AP)—Rumors of threats to kidnap the Princess Elizabeth and Margaret Rose of Great Britain's ruling house were denied today by sources close to King George.

Col. Bowes Lyon, brother of the earl of Strathmore, said no special precautions are being taken to guard the granddaughters of the king, and that an outbreak of scarlet fever was the reason the girls had not been out on shopping trips.

## HINDENBURG'S WILL FALSIFIED, IS CLAIM

PARIS, Aug. 21.—(AP)—The newspaper Paris Soir charged today that the will of the late President Paul Von Hindenburg of Germany had been falsified so as to eliminate a recommendation that former Kaiser Wilhelm should "succeed" him.

## INJECTION TREATMENT SUCCESSFUL IN HERNIA SAYS NOTED SURGEON

CHICAGO, Aug. 21.—(AP)—The "injection" treatment for hernia was described today before the American Association of Railway Surgeons as offering a strong possibility for definite and permanent cure.

The statement was made by Dr. Lawrence J. Quillen of Chicago, district surgeon for the Illinois Central railroad.

The method consists of the injection of one of several different irritant solutions under the skin around the hernia, which is a separation, due to excessive strain, of the muscles composing the abdominal wall. The drugs irritate the separate edges of the muscles and cause adhesions which close the opening.

Recurrences totaled less than four per cent in Dr. Quillen's case, he said, while it was not necessary for the patients to stop work while under treatment.

## ROOSEVELT RETURNS FROM POTOMAC TRIP

WASHINGTON, Aug. 21.—(AP)—President Roosevelt returned to his desk Monday from a week-end cruise on the Potomac aboard the government yacht Sequoia.

He was accompanied by Raymond Moley, former assistant secretary of state; his secretary, Stephen T. Early, and Mrs. Early, and Miss Marguerite Lehman and Miss Grace Tutley, private secretaries.

## SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

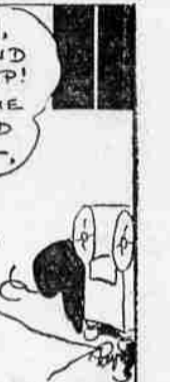
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



FRED PERLEY HAS PUT OFF BUYING NEW TUBES FOR HIS RADIO UNTIL COLD WEATHER, BECAUSE, WITH EVERYBODY KEEPING THEIR WINDOWS OPEN, HE CAN COUNT ON ALWAYS PICKING UP SOMEWHERE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD A BROADCAST THAT HE LIKES

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## SMATTER POP—



By C M Payne

## TAILSPIN TOMMY—Exciting News



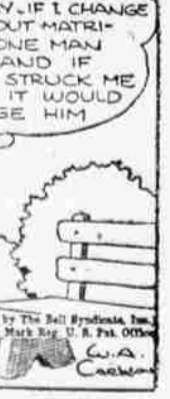
By Hal Forrest

## BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Warning



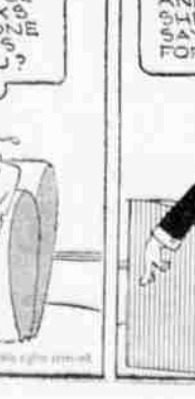
By EDWIN ALGER

## THE NEBBS—It Looks Like Amby



By Sol Hess

## BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus

## FRUIT SPRAY TEST IS SPEEDED UP BY LATEST METHODS

SEATTLE, Aug. 21.—(AP)—A new method of testing for the residue of lead left after spraying fruit for insect control which produces results in about half an hour instead of the three days needed by the old method was announced today by the U. S. department of agriculture.

food control laboratory of the federal food and drug administration.

## CHICAGO TOT SHOT BY GANG IN SEDAN

CHICAGO, Aug. 21.—(AP)—Shot in the head as he sat with his baby brother in a little red wagon, two and a half year old Robert Pitts, Jr., died Monday in a hospital. A bullet had interrupted his happy command of "Giddyup, horses," given to his parents.

The shot was fired by one of four men riding in a sedan. The parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pitts, Sr., were imitating a team of horses for their children. As they drew the wagon down the sidewalk of Stony Island avenue near 90th street, a shot rang out.

"Then Robert gave a little cry," said Pitts. "We look around and there he was, toppled out of the wagon a bullet hole in his head."