

SPITE MARRIAGE

By Katharine Haviland Taylor

Chapter 45 FINAL STORM

"YOU see I never had anyone to love me or care, and so many men offered me the thing they called love that I began to think it a rather tawdry thing which grew out of hunger, and made overeating and indigestion afterward. And that made me marry you as I did. Then, it didn't seem serious."

She paused and, because she was weak, sagged a little. He stood up, settled back of her, and pulled her against him.

"It is better for you this way," he explained, "you really shouldn't be sitting up."

"I'd rather talk without looking at you too," she answered. "Do you understand so far?"

He said he did. And he added, "Let your head rest on my shoulder," and she did.

"Well," she went on, after the new position was assumed, "you loved me and I began to know what love could be. The sort that is big enough to be gentle, to make real and tender care for the other person, and to be happiest when the other person is happy. You did depend on my moods, didn't you, Bob?"

"My dear, always."

"I thought so. And all that made me utterly mad—no, entirely sane—about you. But I couldn't tell you because it was so real and big that it made me feel like crying lots, and as if something were swelling and crowding my heart. And I used to touch your coat and your things in my room when you weren't there. I suppose that sounds silly."

He bent his head until his cheek was against hers. He couldn't help it; he hoped she would forgive him, and let him have, for the few minutes, that much.

"And then," he said in a voice that was rough, "Geoff came, and you found the old love—"

"Just as rotten," she said energetically and characteristically, "as I always knew he was!"

"What do you mean?" he blurted out, as he moved quickly so that he might look at her.

"I mean I disliked him—loved you. No, there's more—lots more. He accused me of forgetting. I had promised to marry him sometime, you see, and I said 'I thought you were married,' and he made me tell him that that was why I married you. (He couldn't make me do anything today!) and then you came in. And later you said you didn't want me."

"I lied. I did! I will always."

"No, it isn't half over yet, Bob." He felt her grow limp in his arms; he, himself, quivered and controlled every emotion in order that he might soothe her.

"Comfortable?" he asked, stiffly. He felt her nod.

"Bob?"

"My dearest!"

"You might kiss me before I go on."

He caught his breath sharply and turned her in his arms only to be stopped with a semi-hysterical "No, I won't! Don't, Bob. . . I'll go on. But I'll sit up to do it. And you must face me. Please, Bob."

Reluctantly, he moved to settle so that he faced her.

"I WANTED to be with you, and to go back with you, after—after mother was through with me. You won't understand how much I wanted it, because you couldn't know how wonderfully beautiful I found it to have a person like you and your mother care."

"It seemed sometimes as if it didn't matter how I got back with you, so long as I did. And I planned a lot, Bob, how I would make you love me again, if I could get off alone with you. You see, no one ever did really care for me before, nor had I ever cared for anyone either. But I am wandering dreadfully."

"I don't mind, but, my dearest, I am getting close to the breaking point. I don't think I can stand much more without—"

He leaned forward, touched her hands, her arms, her face, her hair with broken little atavistic caresses. Gently, but definitely, she put him away.

"Not yet," she said, and then, "Your mother didn't write that note, Bob."

"What, dear?"

"She didn't write it. I wrote it!"

He bent toward her after she spoke, and lifted her chin with his hand until their faces were level. Her eyes wavered, but did not fall.

"I was always a little clever with a pen," she said, "I could draw, and always could imitate writing. I suppose that helped me to do it and one day—when your mother was very ill—I thought 'What shall I do when there's no one?' And it did not seem as if I could go on if there weren't."

"I was sitting by her desk—I'd been writing notes for her—there was a list in her writing for me to copy, and I wrote that note you thought she wrote. Then I slipped it in the box, when she showed me the things that very afternoon."

"I suppose you won't understand. But I kept thinking of being with you, and I suppose I was a little unbalanced. It didn't seem to matter much how I got with you then."

Her mixed narrative dropped to nothing; she looked at him appealingly. "That's all," she said, "and I suppose—the end." And she tried to smile.

"No," he said, so seriously that he seemed stern. "It is the beginning." But she did not understand.

"What made you tell me?" he questioned.

"I care too much to lie," she answered simply. "When I failed to destroy it, and you found it, I thought I'd let it go. But I couldn't. And trying made me sick, and that's all!"

"No!" he answered unsteadily. He stood up, leaned over, and gathered her up in his arms, and then, with the tangled covers trailing after them, he carried her across the room, to settle with her in a deep chair.

"How long," he asked, when he could manage a whisper, "have I let you feel this way?"

"Oh, Bob!"

He felt her groping hands on his face, his hair; felt her sob suddenly and deeply.

"You are—you are going to let me go back with you?" she questioned. He could not speak, he had no voice; he could only press his face to hers and tighten his arms.

"You," she murmured against his cheek, "you do forgive me?"

"Don't," he begged, unsteadily, "it's the other way. My darling!"

"YOU'RE really here," she stated after an interval. He had to bend his head to catch her words. "Dearest, yes!" he answered. She drew a deep breath, and closed her eyes.

"A person becomes rather foolishly uncertain," she explained. "You see I have thought so much of this; I have dreamed dreams, awake, that were quite as real. I know that it is not entirely sane, but I'm not sane about you!"

And he had once tried to make himself believe it was well, that one of them was balanced! He murmured incoherently, as he felt his cheeks grow wet.

"You know," he heard, "how you used to tell me things—things about you, and me, and about being together. And you remember how I stopped? It was because I was conscious of cheating. I am so starved to hear those things, Bob! Please, please say you care—"

But he couldn't.

Her hands found his cheek wet and the reason for his silence. "I'll make this up!" she promised triumphantly. "You'll see, my dearest, how I love you! How I love you!"

Then, with a gasp, he bent his face to hers.

"And that sudden," said Bartholomew but a few days later, "she was well and quite herself as one might say."

The policeman who had dropped in for his cup of coffee, nodded, saying, "And she was close to a decline, Ella, she tells me."

"Into one," said Hannah.

"One of them miracles, as one might say," Bartholomew added.

"They happen," said the man of the law who knew that laws and rules do not cover every happening.

"She's playing," said Hannah in a whisper. From the front of the house came the sound of the piano. Suddenly it ceased, that tune, ceased abruptly, because yet another man had become too acutely aware of one of the miracles, and must with touch know it to be real.

(Copyright, 1934, by K. Haviland-Taylor)

THE END.

COSMIC RAYS AID SCIENCE PROBING SECRETS OF ATOM

NEW YORK.—(UP)—What is the significance of the recent and contemplated inquiries into the realm of the cosmic ray?

One of the foremost uses of these rays is their application as tools for the prosecution of further investigation into the construction of the nucleus, or the core, of the atom.

Such research is made possible thru the enormous energy that the cosmic ray possesses.

Through this energy it is capable of disrupting a nucleus with greater effect than that which is provided in manufactured and artificial agencies.

In this way cosmic rays present a most unique weapon for the furtherance of such scientific determinations.

These super-X-rays, whose penetrating power is the greatest of any ray with which physicists are acquainted, are called cosmic rays because it is believed that they originate far out in inter-stellar space.

What, asks the layman, are the characteristics of these cosmic rays? Some experiments thus far performed do not completely reveal whether they are ether-light-waves (photons) or electrified particles.

At least part of them, however, do consist of electrified particles, as has been supported through experiments conducted by balloon ascensions 17 miles above the earth. These bal-

FARM BOY FELL OUT OF STEEP CORN FIELD

BIG LAUREL, Va.—(UP)—Cornfields in this section are noted for being steep, but Worley Kilgore, Guest River farmer, has the record steep field.

While hoeing corn a few days ago, Winfred Kilgore, his 14-year-old son, fell out of the field and slipped down an almost vertical slope 40 feet below.

Winfred landed astride a splintery stump and his thigh was ripped open by a splinter. He had to be carried to a hospital for treatment.

DROUGHT REGION SHEEP TO BE PURCHASED SOON

PORTLAND, Ore., Aug. 24.—(AP)—The agricultural adjustment administration will begin sheep purchases in Oregon drought areas shortly after August 27, Senator Frederick Steiwer announced.

Senator Steiwer said Harry Petrie, of Denver, Colo., in charge of processing of drought-purchased sheep, informed him that bids on processing and canning mutton would be opened in Washington August 27. Purchases of sheep will begin shortly thereafter, he said.

ALABAMA VETERAN NEW HEAD OF SPANISH WAR MEN'S ORGANIZATION

PITTSBURGH, Aug. 24.—(AP)—The notes of a bugle sounding taps brought the 36th encampment of the United Spanish-American War veterans to a close late yesterday after election of officers.

Judge Leon McCord of Alabama was elected national commander-in-chief by acclamation. He was unopposed.

Robert S. Cain of Pittsburgh, a past department commander, defeated A. P. W. Seibel of Illinois, 818 to 272 for senior vice commander and Ralph Edmunds of Idaho polled 830 votes to 257 for George A. Marshall of California in the race for junior vice commander.

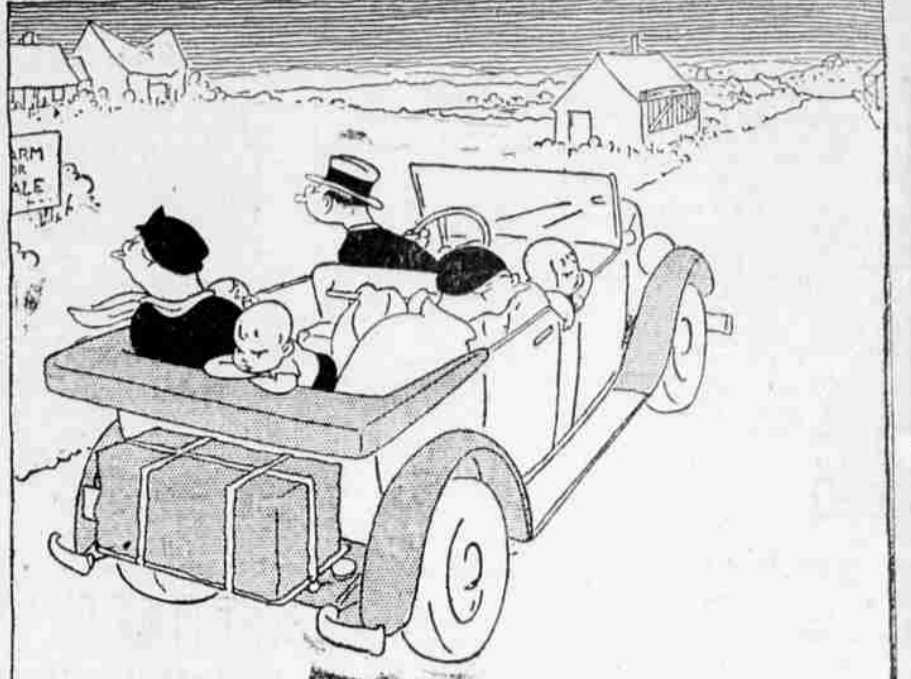
Retiring Commander-in-chief William H. Armstrong of Racine, Wis., was presented a chest of silver by the convention and with a pipe by the auxiliary. Rice W. Means, chairman of the legislative committee and former senator from Colorado, was given a check for \$2,000 contributed by the veterans.

Means said he and his wife will use the money to go to the Philippines, where he has not been since the war.

Next year's convention will be in San Antonio.

City Sued for Frogs SEATTLE, Wash.—(UP)—Jay and Mildred Harrington sued the city today for \$10,250 for loss of their frog raising business. They contended the city dug a ditch in their gravel pit and spoiled their profitable business.

THE WORLD AT ITS WORST



THE CERTAINTY WITH WHICH A COUNTRYSIDE THAT FAIRLY BRISTLED WITH "TOURISTS ACCOMMODATED" SIGNS EARLIER IN THE DAY CHANGES AT DUSK, WHEN YOU DECIDE IT'S TIME TO CALL IT A DAY, TO A REGION OF ABANDONED FARMS, CLOSED HOT-DOG STANDS AND WASTE LAND

8-24 (Copyright, 1934, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

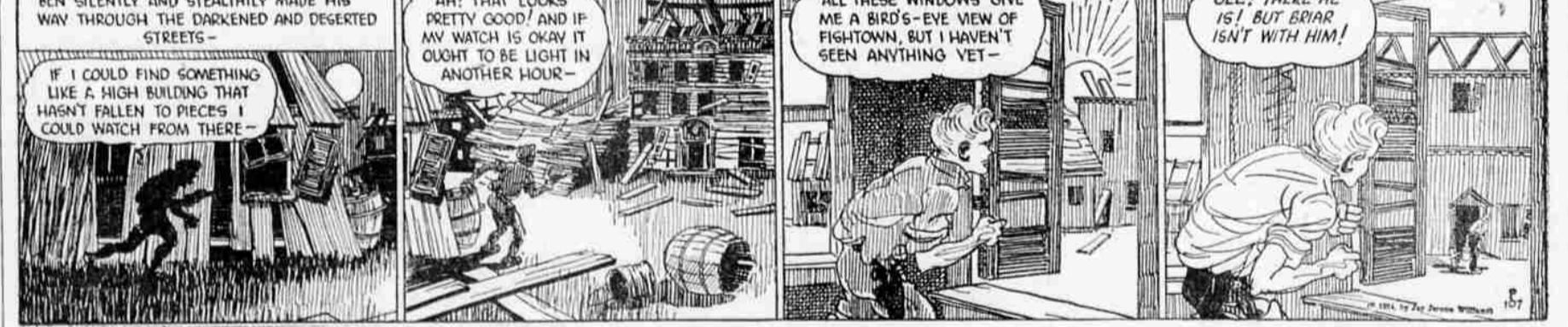
S'MATTER POP—



TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter Checks Up!



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Observation Post



THE NEBBES—It's a Bargain



BRINGING UP FATHER



Man Owns Rocking Pony
MILWAUKEE, Wis. (UP)—Earl Hunt owns a live rocking horse—well, a pony with curling horns for hoofs that resemble skis. Inhabitants from neighboring towns come almost daily to see the strange Shetland pony with ram-like horny hoofs. Zula, as she is called, rocks like a toy horse when she walks on smooth pavement, the rounded hoofs giving her little stability. However, she can run much like any other pony in an open field, Earl said.

Dillinger, Sr., Takes Plane Ride
AKRON, O. (UP)—John Dillinger, Sr., spotlighted into peculiar glory since the demise of his desperado son, had a new thrill here. He went for his first airplane ride. B. E. Fulton, Akron airport manager, took the hoodlum farmer aloft while the elder Dillinger and family were here for a stage appearance.

Vital statistics show 1,037 pairs of twins and 20 triplets were born in Kentucky during 1933.

ENJOY WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT GUM

5¢ AND WORTH IT!

SWEETENS THE BREATH