

Two's Company

By MARGARET GUION HERZOG

The Characters
 Nina, a nice girl with flaxen hair, has fallen in love with her stepfather.
 Richard, a charming, well-tailored stepfather, pays considerable attention to Nina.
 Honey, Nina's gay, plump, youthful mother, is crazy about her new husband.
 David, a young auto salesman, has begun to adore Nina.
 Cordelia is Nina's closest friend.

Chapter 12 Hunting-Eve At Harmony

THAT night in the Capitol, they were munching popcorn out of a rustle paper bag—much to the disgust of some saucy neighbors.

"If I can wangle a car," he whispered, "would you drive down into the wilds of Long Island with me Sunday? Long Beach is fun in the winter, windy and deserted. We might find some foolwery in the sand."

"Oh, dear," she whispered back, "I wish I could, but I'm already dated to spend the weekend there—not at Long Beach, but Long Island I'm sorry I'm hunting, Saturday with the Jonestown Hunt."

He managed to look properly crestfallen, even with his cheeks bulging with popcorn. "I'm delivering a car down that way, on Saturday. Maybe I'll run across you in all your glory... Fact I'll cruise about looking for you. Will you wave to a poor landlubber, Nina?"

At her door, he said: "One of these days I'm going to kiss you, Nina. Pretty soon... one of these days."

She hoped that when he did, it would do something tremendous to her... but she was dreadfully afraid it wouldn't.

"Is that a promise, David?"
 "I'm glad you didn't call it a threat. Yes, my dear, you can count on me."

"Goodnight, then, and thank you for the late assist."

He was looking at her with a look that was both hungry, devouring... and awed and adoring.
 "What? ... Er, oh, yes. Good-night, Nina."
 Nice David.

Richard and Honey, with their arms entwined, were just going up the stairs.

"That red-headed chap again, eh, Nina? Now what kind of a swain is that, who doesn't even make a move to kiss his girl good-night?"

Honey looked up at him, worshipfully.

"There was certainly nothing backward about your tactics, darling, thank heaven!"

"Come here, Nina, I'll finish that young man's job for him..." and Honey stood back, laughing, as Richard kissed her daughter, slowly on the lips.

Carl and Hester

NINA was to spend the weekend with the Semples. They had been friends of the family since long before Mr. Stafford's death. She went down Friday afternoon so as to be able to hunt with Carl on Saturday. Carl lived and breathed horses. He thought like a horse—taking one thing at a time; and he attributed to many lucky escapes in his life to his horse-sense.

He was a big, bluff, hearty man of 40, or thereabout. All the routine things were said about his being a centaur, a part of his horse, and all that. The fact was, he liked horses. It was pretty clear after you'd known him five minutes.

Hester Semple, beautiful, dark Hester... well, she was very different.

When Nina got off the train, a smart young fellow in a dark liveried raised two fingers to his cap. "The cart from Harmony, miss," he said, and led her to a high dogcart with huge yellow wheels.

Carl had cars, three of them, but it was part of the tradition at Harmony that they were only used at night, or in the rain.

They set off down the main road at a smart clip, and presently swerved off into a dirt lane. After a mile or so, they made a right turn and drove between high entrance gates into an avenue of oaks and dogwood and natural undergrowth. They were bare, and a little gloomy looking now, but from past years, Nina knew their glory in the springtime.

Then, suddenly, they were in full view of the great, familiar Georgian house; the two-story entrance porch, with its slender, fluted columns, and carved Corinthian capitals; the lovely entrance door, with its fine palladian windows above; its two long, low wings with a line of boxwood off to the left above the brick wall that enclosed the garden... the magnificent copper beeches and the two old holly trees on either

side of the entrance... Nina drank it all in.

A slender figure in rose appeared in the doorway.

"Welcome back to Harmony, Nina," said Hester Semple, quietly, as her rustled skirt. "It's been a good many weeks since we've had the pleasure of a visit from you."

Nina said, "It's simply grand to be here, Hester," but she thought: "What a formal, prepared, little speech! And then she thought: 'What a beauty!'"

Hester's hair was as black as a raven's wing. She wore it parted in the middle and drawn back over the top of her ears to a heavy coil at the nape of her neck. Her eyes were gray, and quite tragic looking when you caught her off her guard. The rest of the time, the most you could say for them was that they were expressionless.

They entered the square hall, which fulfilled the exterior promise of spaciousness. Twin stairways curved upward toward the two wings. On a long, walnut table, a pot of early poinsettias bloomed brightly against the white paneled walls.

Nina could remember back to before Carl's marriage, when she had visited here with daddy as a little girl. The long walnut table had been a tangle of crochets, hats, gloves and muddled overcoats in those pre-Hester days. And there had been dogs about—all shapes and sizes; and pipes, and a pleasant smell of sawdust and leather.

All that was different now. Carl let Hester do anything she liked with the house, so long as he had his horses. Nina and daddy had always thought that if Hester had had her way, the horses would have been dispensed with, along with the mess on the hall table. Her aversion to horses and all things pertaining to them amounted to a mania, almost. Nina wondered how she could stand the atmosphere... how she could have chosen to live in it, in the first place.

Sweet Music For The Maryland

WHEN Nina came into the great living-room, after she had bathed and changed into a simple black dinner dress, Hester rose punctiliously, and greeted her with a smile... a beautiful smile, revealing even, white teeth—but about as warming as a winter twilight.

Not so, Carl's hearty welcome.

"Well, by heaven, you're a sight for sore eyes! Sorry I wasn't here this afternoon, but Close Harmony strained a ligament and I was down seeing to her."

A big, spare, handsome man—Carl, with a great shock of coarse, tawny hair, that was turning prematurely gray, and a healthy, ruddy complexion. When he talked, he fairly boomed. People invariably stopped and listened, when he began.

"I've a fine mare for you tomorrow, youngster. Gray Dawn, out of Dawn Cloud. She'll carry you better than anything you found down at Warrenton this autumn. Remember how your father and old Dawn Cloud used to reel along?"

"Of course I do." Nina was a good horsewoman. In more affluent days the Staffords had kept saddle horses at the riding club in town; and Nina had hunted with her father in Yorkshire, England—and in the south, Warrenton and the Harford country—and, of course, here, with Carl Semple. "I hear you're considering Sweet Music for the Maryland... that domineering animal!"

Carl laughed.
 "Oh, he has his bad days, but who hasn't?"
 "Well, you know how to handle him, if anyone does," Nina admitted, "but Lord! Twenty-two fences with that chance-y jumper!" She shook her head. She had had occasion to watch Sweet Music when he was decidedly off the subject.

"There's only one jump on the whole course that might bother him—the second. Remember it, Nina? A stiff post and rail under trees... Trees bother him."

He turned away. It was impossible to say that he had lied, for there was never the slightest vestige of color in her cheeks, but a sort of numb look spread over her features, as it always did, at the hint of any accident.

Nina changed the subject. She didn't want to mention Richard, or even think of him, but she hadn't seen the Semples alone since her mother's marriage, and she knew it would seem unnatural if she didn't speak of it.

"Now then, you two, what do you think of my little Honey stepping out and getting herself married?"

Carl boomed out his opinions for both of them, as usual. He thought a lot, apparently, but chiefly that it was a grand thing; and Richard, having shown a keen appreciation of horse flesh, was axes with him.

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Nina's horse slips and goes down, Monday.

Baker Enrolls Here
 BALDWIN, Kas. (UP)—Baker university here reported a 10 percent increase in the freshman class and an approximate six percent increase in the entire school at the end of the first week in its 80th year of existence.

Cheese From Grass
 LONDON (UP)—A plan to "short-circuit" the cow and make cheese directly from grass to provide food for Great Britain's population in event of war was outlined to the British association's meeting at Nottingham.

Wheel Tax Proposed
 STERLING, Ill. (UP)—Proposal for a wheel tax here to obtain additional revenue for enlarging the police force is under consideration. The tax, it was said, would be a flat rate of \$2 for pleasure cars and \$5 for trucks.

S'MATTER POE

By C. M. PAYNE



TAILSPIN TOMMY—An Attack From the Rear!



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Story



THE NEBBS—Town Gossip



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PROSECUTION POSSIBLE ON FAMILY DESERTION

SALEM, Ore., Nov. 5.—(AP)—Any man who abandons his family and goes to another state may be brought back to Oregon and imprisoned for one year, Attorney General I. H. Van Winkle ruled today for L. L. Ray, Lane county district attorney.

Ray said a man left his family in California and moved to another state, and that the mother and children came to Lane county. Van Winkle ruled that the father may be indicted but could not be prosecuted unless he returned to Oregon voluntarily. Since the abandonment occurred in California.

HUGE FEAST PLANNED FOR STATE HOSPITAL

SALEM, Ore., Nov. 5.—(AP)—The 2500 patients at the Oregon state hospital will eat 3000 pounds of chicken and a ton of potatoes for Thanksgiving dinner.

Other items on the menu include 840 bunches of celery, a ton of cabbage, 72 bushels of apples, 3000 biscuits, 700 pumpkin pies and 75 coffee cakes.

It will be washed down with 200 gallons of cider and 300 gallons of coffee.

The patients raised all of the dinner, even the biscuits, except the coffee.

New Coal-Loading Mark

TOLEDO (UP)—The Chesapeake and Ohio coal docks here have established a new world record for loading coal into vessels. Their six dumping machines turned 95,500 tons of coal into the holds of 14 boats within a 24-hour period.

Woman Aviator Honored

MT. DESERT ISLAND, Me. (UP)—Miss Gayle Pond, social worker, aviator and journalist, claims the distinction of being the only American woman ever to hold a British pilot license.