

Two's Company

By MARGARET GUION HERZOG

The Characters

Nina impulsively married David and is trying to forget her intense love for her stepfather. Richard, the charming, well-tailored stepfather, shamelessly talks of love to Nina. Honey, Nina's gay, plump, youthful mother, is wild about Richard, her newly acquired husband. David, a bright young auto salesman, adores Nina and strives to make her happy on his small salary.

Chapter 20

'Please Don't Call'

"WELL, then, would you walk in the park for a while? Bring Button . . . all very respectable . . ."

Nina took the hand-phone away from her ear and looked at it, frowning as though it were a person; and then she smiled at it, and lifted it back.

"No, Richard . . . You know it's—No."

"Precious," his voice came over the wire, low and vibrant, and faintly teasing. "Precious, why are all your little emotions so very—complex?"

"They aren't—complex, Richard; and I think I have only one strong emotion these days . . ."

He said quickly: "Darling . . ."

But she said: ". . . to get over you!"

He didn't answer immediately, so she went on: "And you're not being fair, not helping me . . . calling up every day . . . begging me to see you, Richard, dear—we always talk about me and my fighting against this . . . this thing; but how about you? Don't you want to—play fair?"

"No," he answered, deliberately. "I'm sorry . . . No."

Then my determination will have to be strong enough for both of us . . . Goodbye . . . and would you please not call again? Please?"

"Goodbye, then . . . What was there in his voice? Resignation? Anger? But she noticed that he made no promises, just the same. Nina had been dusting, but now she went over and sat down in one of the little spring-back walnut chairs. She thought and thought.

Which Did She Want?

AN hour later, she was still sitting there . . . the duster still in her hand.

It began like this: Her sudden, impulsive marriage had been a ghastly mistake. Nothing had been changed by it. Richard, and their love for each other, was still there—only now she had dragged David into the tangle, as well. Honey and David. There were two people to deceive . . . two people to hurt, now . . .

And where were they all heading? What did she really want? Should she go on with her travesty of marriage, her travesty of loyalty to her mother? Could she? Or would they some day find out; or, worse still, suspect . . . so that her suffering would have been for nothing?

Or should she be brave, as Hester had been? Face the world, admit her love . . . marry Richard, go away with him, anything—but openly?

Which was right . . . but, no, first of all, which was she? And an hour later, she was still sitting there . . . the duster still in her hand.

But Nina's answer to that question was all mixed up with what Richard wanted. And yet, surely, she knew.

That first evening, the only time he had kissed her, he had said: "This is our last kiss . . . and an hour later, she was still sitting there . . . the duster still in her hand."

When they had all been standing about in the upper hall, at Harmony, the night of Hester's elopement . . . Richard had not joined in the general conversation, he had simply looked at her, and with his eyes he had said: "That might have been you and I . . . Nina," as plainly as though he had spoken.

It might . . . be. But Nina shied away from the thought, as she had trained herself to do.

Instinctively, in these days since her marriage when Richard had been pursuing her—telephoning—begging her to meet him . . . instinctively she had been saying: "No."

Virtually: "I love you. I want you . . . but I mustn't. No. Please don't call."

"We can't stop it, any more than we can stop the sun from rising." . . . Well, if they couldn't, they ought to face it honestly; and if they could, they should.

Nina thought: "We should talk it out, once, fully. Not in furtive little snatches. When he calls again, I will see him."

But she must have sounded unusually determined in their last conversation, because Richard did not call for several days. Nina saw her mother in the afternoon and made a sincere effort to stay away from the 74th St. house in the evenings—because she did not want another encounter with Richard that would be full of meaning, looks, and hidden hand clasps, and a furtiveness that got them nowhere.

In this resolve she was abetted by David, who had no desire to see more of her stepfather than was absolutely necessary. He was fond of Honey, liked to find her there when he came home, and took a fatherly attitude towards her, and her flutery fears for Nina's happiness, that amused all three of them.

Her remarks, that first night after her return from the South, had been a key to her subsequent behavior.

"Are you nice, young man? . . . Is he good to you, Nina?" . . . She had gone right on in that vein, ever since.

She told David that she had offered to increase her daughter's allowance, and that she thought he was mean and foolish not to accept a little help.

She had sat like a little, irate, china doll, on the blue day-bed and scolded him, but David had shaken his finger, and scolded right back at her.

She was the foolish one to think he would allow it. She was the meany to try and dazzle her daughter with dreams of wealth. . . . It ended up in a laugh and a cocktail.

Yes, Honey and David got on beautifully . . . but Richard and David . . . that was something else. David never said anything, but Nina knew how he felt.

Worry Over Honey

ONE day, on 53rd St., Nina ran into a very tired, cross, Carrie Van Alstyne.

"Thank heaven I met you, child," said Horseshoe, taking her arm. "Now we can go round to Long's for a snack . . . I've had a wretched afternoon, getting a permanent." She was propelling Nina briskly, along the street. "Now why do you suppose I'm silly enough to submit to all that torture? Nothing could make me look decent, anyway!"

Nina was tired, too, and worried. Richard had not called her, and—aside from missing the sound of his voice—she wanted to get things cleared up between them.

After having revived her with two old-fashioned, Horseshoe then proceeded to upset her all over again.

"Have you noticed, Nina, that your mother has been behaving lately as though she didn't feel very well?"

"Why . . ."

"Take that attack she called 'grippe' right after she came back from the South with me . . . was that grippe, Nina?"

"Why, Aunt Carrie . . . I don't know. I had no reason to think it was anything else. Oh, dear, now I'm worried."

"Well, she told me she had a cold, and stayed in bed a couple of times on our trip, when I couldn't detect so much as a sniffle."

"Aunt Carrie, I'm going to call up Dr. Fellows this evening."

"Why don't you, child? We should both feel better. Let me know what he says, will you?"

But Nina's talk with the doctor was not wholly reassuring.

"Well, I'll tell you, Nina"—he had been their family physician for a great many years—"your mother isn't actually sick . . . but I find her pretty exhausted, nervously."

"Oh—you've seen her just lately?" Honey hadn't mentioned it.

"Yes. Yesterday, as a matter of fact. Her trip with Mrs. Van Alstyne didn't seem to do her as much good as I had hoped it would. Frankly, child, your mother has been living under a good deal of excitement the last few months . . . used up a lot of nervous energy, what with her new marriage . . . and yours, Nina . . . I've been thinking of that Mediterranean cruise she usually takes in the spring. Do you think you could persuade her to go on an earlier one this year? A long restful ocean voyage would be just the thing for her."

Nina's heart did a quick backflip.

A long ocean voyage—with Richard! Soon! How much good that might accomplish right now, aside from restoring Honey's health!

She said: "Well, here's the thing, Dr. Fellows. I think she would be persuaded all right, but I don't think I'm the one to do it."

If it came as an order from the doctor, Richard would have no choice but to urge Honey to follow his instructions. If he thought it was her—Nina's—idea, he might . . .

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Nina has a "business conference" with Richard, tomorrow.

She said some plan would be devised to remove them.

Row Continues in Townsend Ranks

PORTLAND, Nov. 26.—(AP)—A turmoil within administrative ranks of the Townsend pension plan third congressional district continued today, with one faction attempting to oust three officials, who in turn were seeking to remove the district board.

Mrs. E. J. Greenwood, wife of a board member, contended that Tom Monks, organizer, John Jeffrey, district manager, and Harry Hawkins, Monks' assistant, had been relieved by a 6-5 vote of the board. The officials, in turn, claimed 40 delegates had voted to disband the board.

Mrs. Greenwood complained today that the trio was fired but "they are still sitting down there in the office with their feet on the desks."

Leg-Beauties Sail Angry and Tearful

NEW YORK, Nov. 26.—(AP)—Those European leg-beauties who lost their happy jobs when the French casino closed down this week went home today on the Normandie amid the greatest display of weeping and teeth-grashing the French liner has seen in many a day.

The girls simply couldn't understand why the big cabaret should close its doors, depriving New Yorkers and non-New Yorkers of having so much fun. Doris Merrill, Viennese showgirl, brushed away a tear and said:

"I thought New York liked nudes, and we gave them some of the best nudes they've ever seen here."

WINDOW GLASS—We sell window glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably. Townsend Cabinet Works.

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STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



CHESS GAME OF DEATH!

AHMED I—Sultan of Turkey—POISONED HIS COURT PHYSICIAN, THEN ORDERED THE MAN TO PLAY CHESS WITH HIM SO THAT HE MIGHT WATCH HIM DIE.

THE FIRST AVIATOR TO DOWN A ZEPPELIN, LIEUT. R. A. J. WARNEFORD, HAD HIS PLANE BLOWN UPSIDE DOWN BY THE FORCE OF THE EXPLOSION OF THE AIRSHIP—BUT MANAGED TO LAND HIS PLANE SAFELY AND ESCAPE.

CANDY IS A MEASURE OF WEIGHT IN THE EAST INDIES! (1/4-TON)

HENRY G. PENNIMAN, of Baltimore, Md., THREW A REGULATION LACROSSE BALL 492 FEET, 6 INCHES—IN AN ACCURACY CONTEST! Polo Grounds, New York City, Oct. 27, 1883

Zep Explosion. Flight Sub-Lieutenant R. A. J. Warneford, British pilot of the Royal Naval Air Squadron, took off at dawn of a bleak day in 1915 from the air base at Dunkirk, France, to bomb a German airship. Flying along the Belgian coast, his propeller biting through the chilly early-morning air, Warneford sighted the gray hull of a German Zeppelin returning from a night raid over England.

Warneford quickly jerked his ship up over the giant bag and, near Ghent, cut loose six bombs that made direct hits on the Zeppelin's sleek hull. The result was a blinding explosion that hurled Warneford's plane upward like a lost in an autumn gale, flipping it completely over and "killing" the engine.

Slightly dazed, Warneford righted his ship and brought it safely into a dead-stick landing behind the enemy lines, where he started his engine and took off before being captured.

The Zeppelin, first ever shot down by an aviator, fell in flames on a convent, killing two women and the entire crew of the German airship.

A Candy of Candy. In the East Indies, "candy" is a measure of weight. In Ceylon it is equivalent to 500 pounds, in Bombay it is 560 pounds. Thus a "candy" box of candy would weigh at least a quarter of a ton!

Lacrosse Champion. Henry G. Penniman, Baltimore insurance man, holds a U. S. record for throwing a lacrosse ball that has stood for 34 years. In 1883, when he was a member of the Druid Lacrosse club of Baltimore, Penniman made his remarkable throw at the third annual tournament of the National Lacrosse association in New York City.

The feat is all the more extraordinary because Penniman had to direct his throw between two flags set 20 yards apart as a test of accuracy.

Klamath Budget Held At \$144,000

KLAMATH FALLS, Nov. 26.—(AP)—Klamath county today was prepared to operate through 1938 on an \$144,000 budget.

Two days of public hearings, during which timbermen and other large taxpayers urged a \$40,000 slash in the road fund, failed to produce any important change in the original schedule. It was adopted by the county budget committee late Wednesday at exactly the sum published.

5 Transients Die In S. P. Smashup

FRESNO, Cal., Nov. 26.—(AP)—Work crews today recovered five bodies from the wreckage of a Southern Pacific freight train which

hit spreading rails and plowed up 300 feet of track 12 miles north of here Tuesday night.

Cornet J. N. Lisle identified two of the victims as Joseph Elson Conner, 18, of Los Angeles, and Earl Johnson, a registered nurse, of Denver, Colo.

The other three bodies were badly mangled and Lisle said identification would be difficult. All the casualties were transients.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Feels Low!

FOR OVER HALF AN HOUR FLIGHT TEN HAS BEEN ROARING THROUGH THE FOG-BOUND NIGHT WITH TOMMY AND SKEETS AT THE CONTROLS, WHEN SUDDENLY TOMMY TURNS TO HIS CO-PILOT AND ANXIOUSLY ASKS A QUESTION.

"SKEETS, DO THE MOTORS SOUND OKAY TO YOU?"

"YEAH, SURE! ANYTHING WRONG, TAILSPIN?"

"NO. I . . . WELL, SEE IF YOU CAN CONTACT QATMAN AGAIN AND GET THEIR WEATHER."

"OKAY! WHAT'S THE MATTER? DIDN'T YOU SLEEP LAST NIGHT?"

"YES. JUST GOT A SLIGHT HEADACHE, THAT'S ALL."

"THAT'S FUNNY. MY HEAD'S BUZZIN', TOO. MEBBE IT'S IN SYMPATHY WITH YOURN. HAVE A STICK OF GUM."

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Round One!

I MEAN IT! I MEAN IT! STAY BACK OR I'LL LET YOU HAVE THIS!

YA ASKED FOR IT!

WONDER OF WONDERS! AS THE STICK OF DYNAMITE CAME HURLING AT THEM, OLD JASON DID THE UNBELIEVABLE, CAUGHT IT ON THE FLY!

WE'RE SAFE, MR. JORDAN! NEVER A SPARK FROM A FAT MAN, YOU KNOW.

BEN! THERE'S A HANDCAR AHEAD! TWO OF THEM!

THE NEBBES—Well, What Now?

MAX BOUGHT HIS AWGOMON-INN BACK FROM OLD GRINNER FOR 3000 BUCKS MAKING \$2000 ON THE TRANSACTION.

HELLO, "MRS. ARDLEY SECOND" WITH THAT FACE YOU COULD GET 10 BUCKS A WEEK TO SIT IN A UNDERTAKERS WINDOW!

DON'T GET SOUR, CASTIC, MAX—IF YOU GOT A KIND WORD MID AID YOU SAVING FOR NOBODY IN PARTICULAR, I COULD USE IT.

WELL, I BOUGHT BACK MY PLACE FROM OLD GRINNER. HE'S THE FELLER WHO BOUGHT IT THROUGH YOUR NEAR-HUSBAND. MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO GO INTO BUSINESS WITH ME.

MAYBE I WOULD SOMETHIN' TO DO WOULD MAYBETAKE MY MIND OFF MY TROUBLES!

BUT MR. NEBB WHO IS SO GOOD TO ME MIGHT NOT LIKE IT—I EVEN THINK HE ROBBED MY BONDS—BACK FER ME.

HE DIDN'T DO NOTHIN' FER YOU. IT WAS JUST BECAUSE HE LIKES TO STICK HIS NOSE IN OTHER FOLKS' BUSINESS—HE GETS SO LONESOME MINDIN' HIS OWN BUSINESS.

THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



UNFORTUNATE OCCURRENCE WHEN ENTHUSIASTIC ALUMNUS, FORCED TO ATTEND HIS WIFE'S TEA PARTY, GETS THE NEWS VIA HIS SON'S RADIO THAT HIS COLLEGE HAS JUST SCORED A TOUCHDOWN

S'MATTER POI

By C. M. PAYNE



By HAL FORREST



By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HESS

