

Lady Betty Across the Water

By C. N. & A. M. WILLIAMSON

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Chapter 6

LL the preparations that Mrs. Ess Kay had to make for Newport kept us two more days in New York, and it was terribly hot, but I was not sorry to stay, because we did so many amusing things.

Mr. Doremus was detained, too—by his tailor, he said—so we saw a good deal of him, as Mrs. Van der Windt had left for her Newport cottage. We did go to a roof garden entertainment after all, and it was most fascinating, but quite without the feeling that you might fall off, which I had expected to have. I saw the moon coming up and gliding thousands of rods, and I couldn't help wondering what it would be like to see it from the roof of that club where poor, handsome Jim Brett was employed, though of course it was impossible to speak of him to any one except Vivace.

We lunched one day at an enormous and very fashionable red brick hotel called the Waldorf-Astoria, and went into a Turkish room and had delicious things to eat in a beautiful restaurant which had not at all an out-of-season air, though Mrs. Ess Kay said that most of the well-groomed-looking people whom I suspected of being leaders of the Four Hundred were only "trippers." I do wonder, by the way, why one always has an innate sense of contempt for trippers and longs to be snuffy and show one's own superiority? We must all be trippers somewhere and sometimes, or we would never see anything of the world—indeed, I suppose I am by way of being a tripper now. But one never seems to regard oneself in such a light or imagine that anybody else could be so undervaluing.

I hadn't known that a hotel could be as big as the Waldorf-Astoria, though Mrs. Ess Kay says there are several just about as large in New York, and she has heard there are one or two in Chicago, but she thinks heaven she doesn't know anything personally about that. When she made this remark I remembered what Sally had told me in confidence about Mrs. Ess Kay's life before she began to qualify for the Four Hundred. But of course I did not make any allusion to the subject for fear it was a skeleton in her closet. And Sally says that well-regulated Chicago people think New York is one horse place compared to their town, which is really wonderful and most interesting, as I shall find out if I see it. I wish I could, but I suppose I shan't, as I came over to visit Mrs. Ess Kay, not to do sightseeing.

The second day after we came back from West Point, as I went downstairs the first thing in the morning, I heard Mrs. Ess Kay at the telephone, which is in a little room along a corridor off the fountain court.

She was having a long conversation with some one, laughing and chatting just as if she were talking to a visitor, and presently my name came in. "Yes, Lady Betty—no, not pronounced that way, my child. As if it were spelled B-U-C-K—yes, that's right. Such a pretty girl, a perfect dear. I expect the men will be wild about her at Newport. Potter raves over her. Ha, ha, ha! Do you think so? Well, perhaps, I've known stranger things to happen. No, it's not her father, but her brother, who's the duke. Awfully good looking. I wish he could have come too. But you see Sally wouldn't. You know what Sally is. No, she's never got over that old affair. Southern women are so romantic. Yes, I'll bring dear little Betty with me. Don't tire you. She!"

Then I began to think I ought to let her know I was there, for one hates to eavesdrop. So I yelled at the top of my lungs that I was in the hall waiting to go to breakfast and couldn't help hearing every word she said. However, she didn't mind a bit and called to me to come into the telephone room.

"I'm talking to a friend of mine who has just been moved back to her own apartment after getting over appendicitis," she explained. "Poor thing, she's such an indefatigable society woman, and she does so hate being stuck in the city at this season. I've just been promising to run in and see her this afternoon, and I'd like to take you if you'll go. She'd love to see you. I'll introduce you by phone."

With that she began to chat into the thing again in a chummy sort of way which seemed quite uncanny, as I have always looked upon a telephone as an official kind of machine which you prepared for with fasting and prayer and only had recourse to when strictly necessary for important business. "Here's Lady Betty," said Mrs. Ess Kay. "I'm going to introduce you. Now, Betty, take hold of the—"

"Oh, I can't. I don't know how. I never did," I objected, feeling as if she were going to force me into taking gas against my will. "She would have me try, so I did, as it's very difficult to oppose Mrs. Ess Kay even in the smallest thing. But I couldn't hear a word; only a horrid buzzing, so she had to let me off and

just tell me that the lady we were to call on was Mrs. Harvey Richmond Tylour.

"If you're going to stay long in America you'll have to get used to the phone," said she. "We do half our shopping and some of our calling and make about all our appointments that way. If we didn't there'd be more cases of nervous prostration than there are, and goodness knows there are enough now even since blue rays have come in. Many love affairs are carried on practically entirely by phone, and I've heard that in case of necessity marriage ceremonies can be performed by it."

"How about divorces?" I asked. And I was quite serious, but Mrs. Ess Kay didn't seem to think the question worth an answer. So she switched off her friend and rang up two or three tradespeople of whom she ordered scent and chocolates and some new books and told a manœuvre to call. Then we went in to breakfast.

It appears that the manœuvre person is a great catch, and you are lucky to get him without making an appointment long beforehand. He does things to your feet, too, though I dared not ask what, and Mrs. Ess Kay intended to stop in for him all the morning.

While she was talking about this Sally was glancing over letters, and there was one in which she seemed particularly interested. She looked up from it suddenly when Mrs. Ess Kay said she was not going out and exclaimed: "Oh, then I may have Betty. How nice! I do so want to show her the park."

"I'll go with you," Potter broke in quickly, but Sally shook her head. "No, I want her to myself, thank you—just for this once."

Potter looked cross, but said no more, and it was arranged that Sally and I should start in about an hour. Mrs. Ess Kay thought we ought to get off at once, as it would be cooler. But for some reason Sally did not like that idea. Meanwhile she ran out herself on an errand, but did not offer to take me.

Even people who have absolutely nothing to do except to amuse themselves appear to like waking up and having breakfast much earlier than we do. This morning, as usual, we had finished breakfast by half past 9, and by a quarter past 10 Sally had come back to fetch Vivace and me for our walk.

I hadn't yet been shown Central park. Mrs. Ess Kay said it was horrid out of season. But Sally didn't agree with her. And I thought it lovely, more like the Bois de Boulogne than our park, and yet with an extraordinary individuality of its own. There were only a few people of our sort, riding or driving, but lots of children were playing about, and it was wonderful that the trees and grass and flowers could have kept so fresh through such tremendous heat. I'm sure if we had weather like that in England the whole vegetable kingdom would go on strike.

Whether it was the beauty of the park or whether it was something in herself I don't know, but Sally Woodburn was in a sentimental mood. She is generally full of fun, in her soft, quiet little way, but this morning she was all poetry and romance. She quoted Tennyson and several modern American poets whose names I was ashamed to say I didn't even know, as their verses seemed charming, and when she had found a certain narrow, shady path which she had been looking for suddenly she said: "Let's talk about love. What do you think about love, Betty?"

"I don't know anything about it yet except from books," said I. "Mother



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doesn't like my reading modern novels much, and we haven't many in the library, for Vic reads French ones and hides them. But there are other books besides novels that tell about love—some heavenly ones."

"I should think there were," said Sally. "But I didn't ask you what you

knew; I asked what you thought. Have you ever thought about what it would be like to be in love?"

"Yes," I had to admit shamefacedly, for, as she is not a man, luckily it wasn't necessary to tell a fib. "Have you?"

"I know, once for all," said Sally in a changed voice. "That is why I wanted to talk about it to you before you really begin life over here. Perhaps—it depends on your opinions of love—I'll tell you my little story. I don't tell it to people. But maybe I will tell you this morning. We shall see."

"Is it a sad story, dear?" I asked.

"Yes, it's sad."

"Perhaps it may end well yet, though," I tried to comfort her. Sally shook her head. "It can't in this world. And the saddest part of it is that it was my own fault. But I didn't understand the relative value of things when I lost the one thing in the world that can make real happiness for a woman. I should like you to understand them while you still have time."

"And I should love to hear your story if it won't make you too sad thinking of it," I said.

"Oh, I am always thinking of it. It's never really out of my mind for a minute. It's there, you know, like an undertone, just as when you live near the sea there's always the sound of the waves underlying every other sound, though you mayn't be listening for it."

"Then tell me," I said.

"Not yet. I haven't asked you the questions yet which will show me when you answer them whether you need to hear the story or not. Could you imagine yourself marrying without first being in love?"

"No-o," I said thoughtfully. "Not when it really came to it. But Vic says that's all nonsense; that no woman, no matter how much she thinks herself in love, ever stops in love with her husband. The thing is to marry a man who will let you do as you like and, of course, he must be rich."

Sally sighed. "Well, dear, she's your sister, and I'm just nothing to you at



Lots of children were playing about.

all, but I'd like to tell you to forget about her advice and not care whether a man is rich or poor, or even well born, if only he's made himself a gentleman, body and heart and soul, and is strong and clever enough to take care of you."

The minute she said that the image of Jim Brett rose up before my eyes. I think, though he is poor and perhaps of humble birth, that the girl he marries will be happy and well taken care of.

"You'll hear a lot of talk about money at Newport," she went on, "too much. Among some of the people you'll be with, money's of more importance than anything else. Two or three rich young men are certain to ask you to marry them—very nice fellows they may be, and they will show you heaps of attention—all those that cousin Vivace will let come near you."

experienced you may lose your head a little bit. But do remember that losing your head and being flattered and amused isn't falling in love. A man must be able to make you love him for himself, and that self must be worth loving, for nothing else is any good in the end. And now I'll tell you my story—just in a few words—because it will give you something to think about.

"I'm thirty-two now. When I was nineteen, a year older than you, I cared for a man and he for me. We cared for each other—terribly. But he was poor, and, not only that, he came from people whom mine looked down upon. We loved each other so much, though, that I would have married him in spite of all, but my relations thought it would ruin my life, and they advised and persuaded and implored and insisted, until I was weak enough to give the man up. They took me to Europe, and because I had some money an Italian prince we met in Rome wanted to marry me. They almost argued me into consenting, and though they didn't quite the news went home to Kentucky that I was engaged. The man I really loved—loved dearly all the time, though I was trying to forget him—believed it. Why shouldn't he, since I'd given him up for the reasons I had? He was Catholic, and he went into a monastery we have in Kentucky and became a monk. No one ever wrote to me about it. All my friends thought the less I heard of him the better. And two years later, when I went back home—not engaged, and thinking in my heart that there was and always would be only one man for me in the world—it was to learn that that man had taken the final vows which would separate him from earthly love forever."

"Oh, Betty, you don't know what I suffered. I'd been saying to myself that when I saw him again—as I meant to—I would know by his eyes at the first glance whether he still cared as much as ever, and if he did I would ask him to marry me. But I never saw him again, except with the eyes of my heart, and I always see him so. Not an hour passes that I don't see him so."

"You poor darling!" I exclaimed. And there was a note in her voice that made my eyes sting. "How little I guessed. And you seem so cheerful and even merry."

"One isn't in the world to be a wet blanket," said Sally. "Besides, one isn't actively miserable every minute for years because one has thrown away one's chance of real happiness. One gets along contentedly enough except in the bad hours, when instead of being a mild gray the world is ink black. But I haven't told you this to get sympathy, dear. It hasn't been quite easy telling, for I don't talk much about the deep down

Continued on Page Three

Notice for Publication.
Department of the Interior, U. S. Land Office, Lakeview, Oregon, January 7, 1909.

Notice is hereby given that the State of Oregon has filed its application to select under the provisions of the act of August 14, 1848, and the acts supplemental and amendatory thereto, the SW quarter, Sec 3, T. 36 S., R. 21 E., W. M., per list No. 0863. Any and all persons claiming adversely the lands described, or desiring to object because of the mineral character of the land, or for any other reason, to the disposal of applicant, should file their affidavits of protest in this office, on or before the 6th day of March, 1909.

J. N. Watson, Register.
The foregoing notice will be published in the Lake County Examiner, a weekly newspaper, printed and published at Lakeview, Oregon, for at least thirty days prior to the date last mentioned in the above notice.
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