

MY LOVE TANGLE

This Week's
True Story

**It Does Pay to Be Honest With Yourself and Your Race.
It May Mean Giving Up Riches. In the End You
Will Be Happy. Read the Episode in
This Girl's Life.**

WE ONLY LEARN FROM our own experiences or from the experiences of others. I suppose there are many girls facing and feeling the need of sound advice to save them from disaster. It is for the purpose of helping such girls that I am writing my story. Bear with me, then, and do not judge me too harshly.

Eighteen years ago I was born in a little town some miles below Atlanta, Georgia. I never saw my father and whenever I spoke of him to my mother she always turned away with tears in her eyes. Mother was light brown while I am lighter than she was.

Up until two years ago I lived at home, attended school and kept house while Mother worked as a seamstress for several white families.

When I graduated from the little colored "college" in our town, I saw that there was no future in the place for me, so I began to think about going up North. Mother strenuously objected. She knew nothing of our race's progress up North. "I've been here for forty years," she said, "and I've managed to do pretty well. I have bought and paid for this home and have a little money in the bank. Poor people can't expect much more than that."

But I hated poverty. I hated the very idea of drudging out my life sewing or cooking or washing for some white family of the town who would perhaps despise me because I was so light and yet forced to do such menial work. I swore secretly that I would leave at the first opportunity. I knew mother would never give her consent to my going. She was conservative, satisfied with things as they were, resigned to her small town life, with its dull, drab, unimpaired monotony.

Luck Is With Me

Fortune fell in with my plans in a most miraculous manner. An actress, Miss DeLanize, who was visiting relatives in our town advertised for a colored maid to travel with her, to take the place of her former one who had fallen in love with a young man and married him.

Along with several other of the town girls, I applied for the job. Miss DeLanize looked us over carefully. She was tall, slender, supple, aristocratic, precise, immaculate, beautiful. She was just the type of great lady I wanted to be.

"But certainly you're not colored, are you?" Miss DeLanize asked, looking at me. "Why you're quite as white as I am!" She seemed very puzzled. I assured her that I was a Negro.

"If you want a maid who can also do a little secretarial work, Miss DeLanize," I suggested, remembering the course in stenography I had taken. "I think I'm the girl for you."

"Is that so?" she exclaimed, looking at me with renewed interest. "Well, I rather think you'll fill the bill then." She dismissed the other girls and employed me. I was overjoyed. Now I would have a chance to see the great wide world that I had longed to see. Now I would see the sights of Chicago, San Francisco, New York, and maybe Paris!

But mother stormed and refused at first to let me go despite all of my pleading. It was Harold that turned the tide in my favor. Harold was my beau; a tall, handsome, curly-headed brown boy about nineteen years old whom I had known all of my life. He had always been crazy about me, worshipped me, had tried his best to please me and win my favor, but I had given him scant encouragement. He was not the sort of man I wanted to marry. He was satisfied with the old home town. I was ambitious and wanted to get higher in the world than just being the wife of an insurance agent.

So, Harold helped win mother over and I was grateful to him for it. When I was about to go he begged me for a kiss—it was his first one—and I didn't have the heart to refuse him. I thought I would never see him again and in a way I was a little glad of it. I didn't consider him my type at all, no matter what the other girls in town thought about his desirability.

Traveling Around

Miss DeLanize and I got along splendidly. She said I was the best maid she had ever had and I was delighted with my very light maid duties and secretarial work. She gave me beautiful dresses and gowns that she had only worn a half dozen times. They made me look one hundred per cent better.

For sixteen weeks we traveled from town to town. We always had a suite

in the finest hotel in town and rich and distinguished visitors to our apartments were very frequent. By watching these people I learned much about grace and good manners. Then we arrived in New York City. The great Manhattan! The towered metropolis I had dreamed of so often in my little Southern home. Unfortunately this was the end of the tour, I learned. Miss DeLanize was going to Europe and would need me no longer. She paid me off, adding a large bonus and gave me almost a trunkful of fine clothes.

I was supremely happy and excited. In New York with over a trunkful of fine clothes and a hundred dollars in cash. Sixteen beautiful and alone, but without a job.



"When I was about to go, he begged me for a kiss—it was his first one—and, I didn't have the heart to refuse him."

In New York with its bright lights, its gaiety, its crowds, its theatres, its museums and parks!

For eight dollars a week I got a room not many blocks from Broadway, and proceeded to see the town. I was taken everywhere for a white girl and I didn't take the trouble to dissuade anyone. Why should I have done so? It was good for the first time in one's life to be able to experiment as a white person.

But what finally caused me to decide to become white was the news from Harold that mother had died the week before. He had taken charge of everything for me; attended to the burial, settled the estate and sold the cottage for a thousand dollars. Good old Harold!

Enter Roger Devereaux

After a month or so when I had gotten over my sorrow, I endeavored to get a position. Money goes fast in New York and mine was no exception.

With the aid of the recommendation from Miss DeLanize, I succeeded in getting just the sort of position I wanted—private secretary to a broker in the mid-town section. The salary was thirty dollars a week. Needless to say, I was overjoyed.

My employer, Roger Devereaux, was a young man not over twenty-eight years old. Tall, blonde, always nattily dressed, he was the type of successful business man on the way to his first million, that I had always dreamed of knowing. He was firm, courteous and kindly, with pale blue eyes that reflected a fine soul within.

I was apt and efficient and so we got along well together. I loved my work and was soon able to do all of

Mr. Devereaux's correspondence myself. This evidently pleased him because he cast many admiring glances in my direction from time to time.

Finally he came in one day and asked out of a clear sky: "Laura—er—a—Miss Bowman, do you ever go to the theater?"

"Why... Why yes," I stammered. Could he be going to take me to the theater? I trembled all over with anticipation and lowered my gaze to hide my emotion.

"Well," he continued, "I've got a couple of good seats for the 'Witch Woman.' How would you like to see that?" He glanced at me anxiously from under his long, sweeping black eyelashes, as he stood tapping his fingers on my desk.

I told him I would be delighted to see the famous musical comedy. He asked for my address and said he would call at eight.

I was walking on air as I hurried across town to my rooming place. No queen on earth was happier than I. Instead of going to my favorite restaurant for dinner, I went straight home and spent all of the time rearranging my toilet. I wanted to look my best for Mr. Devereaux.

At eight o'clock the front door bell

We entered. The floor show was on. Jokes, laughter, tap dancing, singing, jazz! What a gorgeous whirl! Like new wine it sped to my brain and intoxicated me. I glanced timidly, thankfully at Roger. He glanced suddenly at me and I lowered my head in confusion. He was so handsome!

The lights dimmed. Couples rose to dance. Roger held me firmly in his strong arms, close to him, very close, as we weaved in and out of the well-dressed crowd.

It was over all too soon. Three o'clock in the morning! It was a great thrill. Without trying to get fresh as many men would have done, Roger bade me adieu at my doorstep and disappeared in the darkness, swinging his cane.

Courtship in New York

Human existence is like a ball thrown down hill. It goes on and on first this way and then the other. Each incident may either halt it entirely, slow up its progress or increase the speed of its descent.

Our affair was like that. Two or three times a week, Roger and I went out together. It was hard to refuse when I really wanted to go. He was so fine and I was beginning to care greatly for him.

Then one Saturday afternoon we drove far into Connecticut in his long, blue roadster. "Clear blue skies! Rain-washed air! A brassy sun beaming down on budding trees. Spring! A time for love and languor!"

Suddenly Roger stopped the car and proposed to me. "Laura!" he cried huskily. "I want you... you are so beautiful; so accomplished... We ought to... get on well together... Will you... Will you marry me, Laura?" Such earnestness, such intense, honest emotion. His impetuosity swept me off my feet for a moment.

I wanted to fall into his arms and say "Yes," but the knowledge of my secret restrained me, and then, somehow or other the thought of Harold Carson came to my mind. Would Roger love me if he knew that I was colored? Did I have a right to jeopardize his happiness? Suppose I should marry him and then have him discover sometime that I was a Negro! The thought stunned me. I begged him to wait a few days for my answer. I wanted a chance to get myself together—to think over this problem.

Silently we drove back to the great city. Roger let me out at my door after begging for and receiving a kiss. I dashed up the stairs and fell across my bed in a paroxysm of grief.

Harold Carson Arrived

I had been lying there fully clothed

for perhaps an hour when the door bell buzzed and old Mrs. McGraw announced Harold Carson! Harold Carson! God! this was too much!

With shaking legs I went down stairs. Mrs. McGraw looking suspicious, was in the hall, standing with her hands on her hips. I knew she was angry that I had a Negro visitor. The prejudice showing in her eyes infuriated me. In a flash I realized the danger and unfairness of tying myself to Roger Devereaux despite all of his wealth.

Then I entered the parlor. Harold rose. How much handsomer he looked in his new clothes, new shoes and new hat. Seeing him aroused all the memories of home and the many happy hours I had spent in his company. A surge of affection welled up in my breast. He held out his arms in welcome, and before I could control myself, I fell into them and offered my lips to his.

"Oh, Laura!" he cried. "I just had to come North and find you. I was dying without you. I had to see you. Won't you come with me, dear? I'm going to live in Harlem and work in the insurance office there. I can't offer you much dear, but I'll be the best husband in the world to you. Please, Laura, come with me. Will you? Oh, I have loved you so, ever since I first saw you, when we were kids together!"

After all, I thought to myself, I am colored, even though my skin is white. Harold is my own kind. I won't have to pretend or hide anything from him. With Roger it would be one continual fear obsession, one long reign of pretense and hypocrisy. Better to live a frank, open life with one of your own men, even though in ordinary circumstances, than a fearful existence surrounded with all that money can buy.

So I decided to accept Harold. He was delighted. Mrs. McGraw came in and found me in his arms. She was shocked beyond words but I didn't care. Soon we, Harold and I, would be in Harlem, among our people, starting a new existence.

We have been married happily for a year now. We will probably never be rich and I have long since given up hope of being surrounded with the expensive things of which I dreamed when I was a lot younger. We haven't been outside of New York except to Atlantic City and Coney Island and Bear Mountain, but strangely enough, I am happy. And yet there are times when I dream of noble and wealthy Roger Devereaux and wonder how many girls in my position would have done as I did.

THE END

King Prempeh and the Golden Stool

(Continued from page four)

to in strength and bravery.

Second Camp: We are like him, too.

Four months passed and the garrison held grimly on. It seemed as if surrender to Kobina Cheri was inevitable. But an expedition led by General Sir James Wilcocks was fighting its way through the bush, endeavoring to reach Coomassie before it was too late; while the civilized world waited eagerly, day by day, to learn the fate of the imprisoned Europeans.

At last, on July 15, the expedition arrived and raised the siege after a hard-fought battle.

The Black Relief Expedition

A significant fact: The relief expedition was composed, not for the white officers, entirely of Negroes—native soldiers and a West India Regiment. Also it was the native Africans, the Fantis and others, who by stealing out and bringing food had enabled the white people to hold out so long.

This important fact about the conquest of Africa must be noted: it is the African soldier and African burden-bearer who has done the greater part of the task. Without their aid, the white man, it is safe to say, could never have conquered Africa. It is also by grace of black men that they still maintain their supremacy.

Defiant to the Last

Among those captured in the last battle was Kobina Cheri, who had been wounded. The next day he was hanged in the market place in the presence of the army and the survivors of the siege. His courage did not fail him and he died defiant to the last.

For several months, the Ashantis fought on, charging with desperate valor sometimes to within ten feet of the machine guns. In the battle of Obasso, Opuku, chief commander,

was killed; after which resistance began to lag. Peace, however, was not restored until 1901. In 1908 there was another revolt which was quickly suppressed.

The Golden Stool Removed

And what of the Golden Stool? Its subsequent history, as told even in official documents, reads like a romance.

For twenty-five years it lay hidden, its guardians watching it with jealous care, and refusing all bribes to reveal its hiding place. Then in 1921, it was almost discovered by accident. A new government road was being built along the place where it lay buried between two great sheets of brass. The laborers were nearing the spot, when the custodians coming up, frightened them away by telling them that the spirit of the small-pox had been buried where they were working and would seize on any one who disturbed the soil.

That night they moved the Golden Stool to a safer spot.

The Golden Stool Stripped

But they had evidently been seen, for soon after, the stool was discovered, stripped of its massive gold ornaments. An old woman, seeing a gold ornament that had been offered for sale, recognized it as belonging to the Golden Stool, whereupon the whole matter came to light.

The robbers were saved from instant death only by being rushed to prison under escort. A few hours later, the Ashanti nation went into mourning, deploring a loss greater than that of their king.

The robbers were given long sentences. As to the Golden Stool, it is said, that it was taken to England and later returned to Coomassie.

(NOTE—It was said that King Prempeh was still in exile, but we understand he was permitted to return to Ashanti in 1928 as a private citizen.)

—THE END—