

Verna, the Irresistible

by
**WALTER
GLASTON**

(Continued from Page Three)

about you," he said softly one evening as he brought the roadster to a stop under a huge oak tree a few miles from town. He took her petal-smooth brown hand and stroked it gently.

"Is it love, Don," said Verna, half amused, "or is it just passion?"

"It's love, Verna."

"How do I know you're telling the truth. All of you men say that."

"But all men aren't alike, Verna."

"Oh, No-o-o? Well, there might be a difference in the way they work, but they're all looking for the same thing."

"You're too young to be so hard, my dear."

"Well, I don't think so. You can't ever be too young to know what it's all about."

"But Verna," Don expostulated, "I'm really sincere. It would give me more pleasure than anything I know if you would let me be your friend."

"Aren't we already friends, Don?"

"Oh, you know what I mean!"

"I heard what you said."

"Now, Honey, don't be like that. I've been pretty nice to you, haven't I?"

"Do you want me to give you credit for that? I thought you were naturally polite."

"Of course I'm naturally polite, you silly girl, but still a young fellow like me expects a girl to give him a break when he's been real nice."

COLOR CRAZE REACHES TABLEWARE

That's the latest thing in dishes—colored table glassware. Society women are using this now from first-course dishes to those served last.

This glassware comes in many shades—topaz, amber, rose, green and azure, and may be used with all dishes of one shade, or in various combinations of color.

With colored glassware, comes colored linens, candles, fruits, flowers—everything is in color. Even the salads are taking unto themselves a great deal of color, and desserts are being prepared that glisten in red, green and even gold.

The day of color is with us. The day of plain white linen and simple white dishes, with or without a faint band or pattern, seems to be passing. Of course, one sees such things yet, but more and more one comes across the colored glassware, colored linen, colored bath-rooms, colored vases, colored automobiles, oh, it seems that almost everything is running to color.

First thing we know our men will be prancing down Main Street with red flannel trousers, a sky-blue coat, and a necktie containing all the colors of the rainbow and a lot that the rainbow never thought of.

"Just what do you mean?"

"Is it necessary to go into details?"

"Well, you had ought to make yourself clear. I'm no mind reader, you know."

Don "Stalled off"

Verna loved to match wits with men. It gave her a thrill to know that she could hold them at a distance. Let them come just so close and no closer. She felt that she could not afford to go too far with Donald Baxter. There was a certain something about her that warned her to be on her guard. Nevertheless she was not unaware of her station in life and the exalted position in the social scheme to which she aspired. Contact with Don might help her to get those things, so she did not want to exasperate him too much.

Don was not far from being exasperated. His desire for Verna grew by the minute and yet, in spite of all he did to make her happy, she held him at arms' length.

"I'm getting sick of being stalled off," he grumbled. "Here I've been knowing you for over three weeks and you've been too stinky to even let me have a kiss. How long do you think I would have to drive these other girls around before they would do me that little favor?"

"Are you comparing me with the other girls in this town?" she queried archly. "I thought you said I was in a class by myself?"

"Of course you are, Honey," he hastened to assure her. "And I wouldn't think of comparing you with the other girls, but I just want you to know that I think you've been ungrateful."

Verna saw that she had probably overplayed her hand. While she was confident that her beauty and charm would hold Don or any other man, she also knew, almost instinctively, that even the most ardent lovers throw up the sponge if they are not encouraged.

"Don't be silly, old pal," she cooed, placing her dainty brown hand on his shoulder. "If you knew how much I really cared for you, you wouldn't worry at all. I'm not as ungrateful as you think I am; but a girl's got to be careful, you know."

Don brightened visibly. After all, perhaps Verna was a "regular fellow." He leaned over now and

touched her cheek lightly with his lips. She smiled coquettishly and emboldened by her invitation, he crushed her in his strong arms.

"Sweetheart," he said hoarsely, "please let me take you out of all this. You have no business slaying your life away in the white folks' kitchen when I can give you everything you want. Don't be a fool; let me help you."

"Maybe I might—some time," she said quietly, nestling a bit closer, "but you're still not going into details. Don't suppose you want me to go back to Kalesburg with you, don't you?"

"We-ell, yes," Don admitted.

"Yes, and what then. You tell me how much you are going to give me and how good you're going to be to me, but you haven't explained anything. I may be living in a dirty shack here in Norrisburg but at least I'm honest, Don, and can look the world in the face."

Verna, the Dare-devil

"Who asked you not to be honest?" he blustered. He had a sudden thought and inspiration. "I'm going to offer you a good job in my cabaret in Norrisburg. All you'll have to do is to act as hostess, wear fine clothes and be nice to the customers. So you see you'll be making your own money and I won't bother you unless you permit me. If that isn't a fair proposition, I don't know one when I see it."

Verna's eyes glistened. Here WAS the real opportunity she had been looking for; a chance to get out of

the dirt and squalor of Billy Goat Lane without compromising herself. She wanted so much to get ahead, to amount to something, and here was a way out. She felt confident that she could take care of herself. Besides, she was convinced that Don was sincere.

"I'll take you on that," she said firmly and simply.

"When?" he asked, with strangely mingled feeling of joy and triumph. "Will you go now? I'll get all of the things you need and you needn't bother about that two or three dollars that the Richlands owe you. That's merely chicken feed. Tell me, will you go now?"

Verna hesitated and pondered. It was a dangerous step she was taking, and yet what hope was there for her in Norrisburg? What could a girl—especially a colored one—amount to there? How could she ever have the pretty things she wanted to set off her beauty just by working as a maid or a cook?

The old dare-devil spirit that had distinguished her from the other girls since she was able to walk now surred within her. She had nothing to lose, she felt, and a great deal to gain. Turning to Don, she announced smilingly, "All right, big boy, I'm game."

Don could almost have shouted with glee. He turned to start the car, and there beside it, looking grim and determined, was Dick Colvin.

(To be continued next week)

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