

GIFTS OF THE MAGI

BY O. HENRY



Della finished her cry and repaired her makeup. She stood by the window and looked dully at a gray cat walking on a gray fence in a gray backyard.



Tomorrow would be Christmas Day, and she had only \$1.87 to buy Jim a present. Many a happy hour she had spent planning for something fine, something worthy of being owned by Jim.



Suddenly she whirled from the window and stood before the mirror, her eyes shining brilliantly.

Housing Shortage Big Factor In Soviet Marriage

By GAY PAULLEY
UPI Women's Editor

NEW YORK (UPI) — Soviet boy meets girl. Soviet boy thinks of marriage—and then of the housing shortage. For marriage often is contingent on whether the couple will have a place to live.

The bearing that housing accommodations have on Ivan and Olga's courtship showed in a survey by the Soviet Academy of Sciences of 500 young couples in the Leningrad area.

Results were reported at headquarters here of Radio Liberty, which uncovered the poll in its regular research of Soviet publications and broadcasts. The Soviet publication which reported the poll headlined it, "Love and Living Space. Data on Soviet Marriage."

The survey showed that elopements were a rarity and that four out of five couples obtained parental consent before taking marriage vows, apparently in part because Ivan and Olga often planned to live either with the parents of the bridegroom or the bride.

Radio Liberty said that to the question, "where do you intend to live after your marriage?" 20 per cent of the couples said they would stay with the bridegroom's parents; 16 per cent with those of the bride's. Another 10 per cent said "we hope to get a new apartment of our own." And seven per cent said they would live in an apartment the bride already had; an equal number in an apartment the bridegroom already had.

One of every six couples said they planned to take a room, indicating that apartments are scarce in Soviet land.

The poll, conducted in four

varied communities of the Leningrad district, produced information also on what the couples thought were ingredients of a happy marriage and how they met.

Three of every four couples said they considered "the main conditions for a durable and happy marriage" to be "love, common views, faith, sincerity and friendship."

Thirteen per cent gave their vote to "equality and respect." Four per cent identified "love and living space." And the remainder listed such qualities as "love and material well-being, lots of children and a realistic view towards life."

How did the couples meet? Twenty-seven per cent said at dances, theaters and skating rinks.

Another 20 per cent became acquainted at work, 18 per cent met in school, and one out of every 10 couples said they had known each other since childhood.

Other introductions came at house parties, during summer vacations, through their parents, on trains, in hospitals or in libraries.

In nearly one of every four marriages, the wife was older than the husband. A few had as many as 10 years seniority.

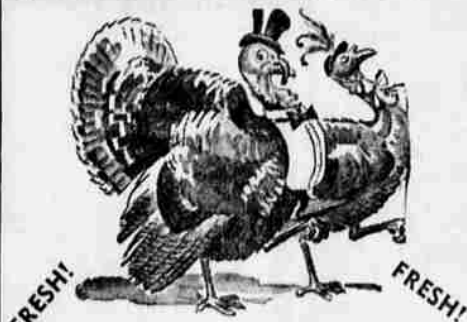
Radio Liberty doesn't usually go in for boy-meets-girl stories.

Its research staff of Soviet experts, including 200 ex-Soviet citizens, concentrate on the number one job of reporting news denied Russian citizens within their own borders.

Radio Liberty, privately supported through the American Committee for Liberation,

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