

For the LOVE of EVE

by Lucy Walling

CHAPTER I-A

MR. BIXBY frowned slightly. "Yes, you are to start to night. I thought that point was definitely understood. As you know, Miss Marshall leaves Saturday. We want you here the following Monday."

"Go up to my office," Mr. Bixby went on, "and Miss Birney will take care of your expense money. She's wired for a hotel reservation and ordered your transportation. Take whatever time you need this afternoon to go home and pack or for shopping." With an indulgent smile he dismissed an exultant yet frightened Eve.

Eve knew that this trip to New York meant that the management at Bixby's had almost certainly decided upon her as the successor to Alice Marshall. When she accepted the expense money for the trip, she felt she had sealed her fate. It was the thing she had wanted, of course. She had slaved to get where she was. Eve's work always had come before her pleasures and ever since she began working she had bent all her energy toward one goal—to become manager of an advertising office. This promotion was a long and important step toward that ambition.

The expense money exchanged for travelers' checks and tucked safely into the chambray bag with her precious wedding ring. Eve went to the Y. W. C. A. where she had roomed ever since coming to Lake City, and packed a bag for the New York trip.

The small, shabby room at the Y that she had occupied these last busy, happy months of her girlhood already seemed a little strange, a little deserted. Eve had stayed on here ever after she could have afforded more attractive and comfortable quarters. This decision was prompted entirely by economy. The building was conveniently near her work, and provided room and board at a very reasonable rate. Eve preferred to economize thus and put the money saved into pretty clothes and educational advancement. Eve was careful; thrifty. She did nothing without a definite purpose.

From the little table that served as a writing desk the pictured face of Eve's mother smiled at her from his cheap frame—the warm, steady mother-smile that had been unfailing all through Eve's life. Now she paused lovingly before that picture of Kate Bayless. It was wrong, of course, not to have written to her mother that she was marrying Dick today. It was the first time she had ever shut her mother out from any important event of her life. True, she and Dick had decided hastily. And of course her mother was certain to approve of Dick, Eve reflected proudly. Her father, too, Dick Rader was exactly the sort of dependable, industrious young man to please the most exacting parents. Nothing to worry about on that score.

Suddenly Eve was conscious of that cheap, nondescript frame that held her mother's picture. Always she had planned to buy a better one, but always there had been something she had wanted for herself. Now she was ashamed that Dick should see her mother's picture in this frame. It almost seemed to her that he would know about the various things she had bought for herself with money that might have bought a frame. She would buy a new one in New York—a lovely, silver one.

As she packed for the trip Eve remembered regretfully that she really had very little beside her clothes to take to her new home. She had never, as do so many girls, bought pretty things to adorn her future home. Either, her sister, had dozens of lovely gifts to take with her when she married. But Esther had no such long engagement to a home-town boy, showers, engagement parties, and a wedding to which a wide circle of relatives and friends were invited. Those things meant so much to Esther. With Eve marriage was important, but so was her career.

Eve recalled how she had started at Bixby's. Determined to get a foothold as a copy-writer, she had made the rounds of all the agencies and all the stores in Lake City before she reached Bixby's. The fact that no one needed a beginner and frankly told her so, had not discouraged her but merely put her on her mettle. Then she did what she considered a daring, preposterous thing. She went to Bixby's, most exclusive store of all, and begged Earle Barnes, the advertising manager, to give her a trial. "Never mind discussing salary now," she had said. "Let me work two weeks. Then give me what you think I'm worth." And that astute gentleman, who prided himself on his shrewdness in judging an applicant's character and ability, had told her to go ahead.

"But remember," he warned

her, "I'm not promising you a definite job. There isn't an opening here at present. You'll have to make a place for yourself. Browse around here and there in the store. If you see merchandise that looks to you like news, write about it. If you make good—"

And Eve had made good. Now Barnes was demonstrating his faith in her ability by giving her a column in Bixby's daily advertisement to fill with chatty comment on the fashions, new merchandise and the like. And to give the column an impressive start, Eve was to have a week in New York. Two days with Freda Carter, the dress buyer, on her way home from Paris with trunks filled with gowns from the Rue de la Paix, and the rest of the week to look about for herself. Eve's heart should sing, she told herself. Instead of lying like a lump of lead and interfering with her breath. Her heart should sing because she was Dick's wife. But this evening—the evening of their wedding—she was going to New York without him. And Dick had not yet been told that she was going.

It was 5:40 that evening before Eve, almost breathless with haste and excitement, emerged from Bixby's. Dick was waiting. There was something almost pathetic about the way she approached him. "Oh, Dick, I've kept you waiting!" she cried, penitent, as she slipped her arm through his. And something reassuring, protecting, in his answer that he would always be waiting for her.

The November day had turned stormy and Eve brushed the snow from Dick's shoulders as they reached his roadster. How handsome he looked in his new navy-blue camel's hair overcoat. There was an air of unassuming prosperity about him. Dick tucked her in, pressed her hand and closed the door. When he slipped behind the wheel and started the motor Eve leaned over and kissed him. With a quick look to see that no one was near, Dick gathered her in his arms for a brief instant and as quickly let her go. She would tell him now. Might as well have it over.

"Dick," she began, "I have something very, very important to tell you."

"Better wait till we get out of this traffic," he warned. "We'll have a lot to talk over then." And Eve was glad for the delay. It was not going to be easy to tell him. They followed the boulevard toward the city.

Dick driving at the rate of 25 miles an hour to keep with the green lights and avoid abrupt stopping on the slippery asphalt. Eve was sick with worry. She snuggled as closely as she dared to Dick's arm. "Happy?" he asked. "You know I am," she told him and managed to smile. They drove to Mission Inn for their wedding dinner. Eve was glad that Dick had selected this charming place. The evergreens outside the imposing, tile-roofed stucco building were mantled with Christmas-like whiteness. Inside, soft organ music came from the chapel.

At their table—a small one set for two—the southern California influence for which Mission Inn had been named was even more in evidence. A starred ceiling of heavenly blue shut out the winter night and stars. Wisteria trailed along the eaves and hung in purple clusters. Brilliantly colored parakeets looked saucily at the diners from their ringed perches near the fountain. Here was a lemon tree in a green tub and there an orange tree or an oleander. The air was fragrant with exotic blossoms. On a wrought iron balcony above sat a senorita in yellow, wearing a black lace mantilla and a red rose in her hair. She was picking out soft melodies on a golden harp. Dick had reserved the table and ordered the dinner. Excited and worried as she was, Eve realized that she was hungry. She remembered now that she had eaten nothing since breakfast. She sipped the mushroom soup, with its unusual piquancy of flavor, for which the inn was famous and ate with relish the baked squash which was another specialty of the place. When the desert arrived—frozen cream molded in the form of mission bells—she looked thoughtfully across the table at Dick.

"Our wedding bells, Dick," she smiled wistfully. "I like it this way," he said. "Without all the fuss and excitement. Just we two in a world by ourselves."

Eve murmured. Then she took the plunge. "Darling," she began, "I've been trying to tell you for an hour. I—nothing has ever been so hard for me! I can scarcely begin—but would you feel dreadfully if I had to leave you?"

(To Be Continued)

Malin Ladies' Aid Plans for Bazaar

MALIN, Ore.—The Ladies Aid of the Malin church met Thursday afternoon with a large attendance. The regular monthly business meeting was followed by a social hour and refreshments were served. Plans were made for the annual bazaar. It was voted to meet every two weeks on Thursday afternoon, however a special meeting has been announced for next Thursday afternoon at the church when work will be done on a comforter.

Members present were Mesdames Loosley, Rightmire, Trip, left, Bert Williamson, Baker, Cline, Thomas, McComb, Lewis, Johnson, Bell, Sayers, Schriener and Porter.

The lobster's skeleton is outside its body and its muscles inside the skeleton.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams



OUR BOARDING HOUSE

By Ahern



SALESMAN SAM

By Small



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

By Martin



WASH TUBBS

By Crane



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS

By Blosser



THE NEWFANGLES—MOM'N POP

By Cowan

