

Prologue to Love

By
**MARTHA
OSTENSO**

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SYNOPSIS

Lovely, independent Autumn Dean, returning home to British Columbia from abroad without her father's knowledge, stops at the home of Hector Cardigan, an old family friend. He tells her that she should not have come home, that things have changed. Arriving home at the "Castle of the Normans," she is greeted lovingly by her father, Jarvis Dean, who gives her the understanding that she is welcome—for a short visit. Her mother, former belle named Millicent Odell, has been dead for years. Autumn cannot understand her father's attitude, though gives him to understand that she is home for good. She has grown tired of life in England, where she lived with an aunt. Riding around the estate with her father, Autumn realizes that he has changed.

CHAPTER II—Continued

When Autumn drew abreast of her father again, his face was oddly rigid and colorless. Hector Cardigan had been right, then. Her father had changed. He was not the man she had known in other years. He was getting old, and the burden of living had lain too heavily upon him. Her impatience with his mood melted to pity as she thought of him. "By the way, father, how are the Landors?" she asked casually, when they had ridden a short distance. "Eh? The Landors? Ah—they're well, I presume," he said absently. "You told me at Christmas time that Mrs. Landor had been ill," she reminded him. "Oh, yes, yes, of course," he said hastily. "Old Jane has been very low. She's not long for this world, I'm afraid."

"And Bruce?" "But Jarvis had fixed his eyes suddenly on a straggling bunch of frail new weeds close to the trail. He dismounted abruptly and pulled the grasses up by the roots. "Milk vetch," he remarked, and got back into the saddle.

When they arrived at the camp, old Absolom was in his shack, brewing coffee and frying bacon. While her father went indoors, Autumn lingered for a moment outside, her eyes sweeping the rounded skyline above her, where the morning sun was burnishing the hills. The snug little valley into which she had ridden was filled with the bleat of ewes and the tiny cry of hundreds of newborn lambs. On the sunlit slope above her, the main flocks grazed, ewes with their lambs old enough to be released from the pens, or ewes which had not yet dropped their young.

Jarvis Dean's voice called to her from the doorway of the shack. There was old Absolom Peek, grown more wizened and gnome-like than ever, his weathered face contorted in a shy grin. He held the screen door open and she ran up to him. "Hello, Absolom!" she called.

He shook hands with her, his old eyes beaming and watering with delight. "Welcome home, Miss Autumn!" he said, achieving a gallant little jerk of a bow. "You've been gone a long time. But a fine young lady they've made of you, I see."

Autumn laughed and glanced at her father who stood by, tall and elegant in his riding clothes, smiling indulgently down upon his old helper.

"I've been gone too long, Absolom," Autumn said. "But I'm home for good now, and I'll be over to see you often."

"We'll be makin' for the hills right after another fortnight," Absolom told her. "In about another fortnight."

"Stay and visit with Absolom while I go out and look over the new family," Jarvis said, starting for the corral. "Come along when you feel like it."

Autumn entered the shack and seated herself while Absolom tended to his coffee and bacon.

"It'll be like old times havin' you back at the Castle, Miss Autumn," the old helper said. "You'll be puttin' new life into the old place."

"Perhaps the old place could stand a little new life," Autumn replied.

Absolom turned to her with the frying pan in one hand, then glanced quickly through the doorway.

"And I'm telling you it could stand a lot of it," he said. "You never saw such a place as that's got to be. The Laird's a great man, an' still hearty for a man of his years, mind you, but there's need of someone about the house there besides that poor old body that does the cookin' and the cleanin'." In the old days we used to have a bit of a dance now an' then, or something to keep a man from gettin' old before his time—but yon's a morgue, gettin' to be."

"You give me an idea, Absolom," Autumn said. "It isn't every day in the year that a daughter comes home. I'm going to celebrate. I'm going to invite the whole countryside to a dance. Will you come? We couldn't give a party without you."

"We'll be leavin' in another fortnight," he reminded her. "We'll make it next Friday night, then."

Absolom's face lighted up with enormous pleasure. "I'll come, right enough, if I can get away to it. But ye'll promise to put on a few of the old dances, mind. I'm gettin' too stiff in the j'ints for the stuff they call dancin' nowadays."

Autumn laughed. "If some of the youngsters today tried your reels, Absolom, they'd have to be carried off the floor."

"Aye, that's right enough, too. But who'll ye be askin', now?"

"Everybody!" Autumn replied. The old fellow's eyes became dreamy with reminiscence. "I've had many a good turn in my time with Katie Macdougall, down at The Bend—if ye'll think of it to ask her," he suggested archly.

"We'll send her a special invitation, Absolom," Autumn promised, getting up. "I'd better leave you to your coffee, now, while I go and take a look at the lambs."

"Aye, an' they're worth lookin' at. Nigh unto five hundred was dropped durin' the night."

Autumn went out and found her father beside one of the pens that opened off the corral. Within it a large, robust ewe stood in maternal dignity, while about her pranced a day-old lamb on its ridiculous legs, flicking an absurd cottony tail.

Autumn laughed in sheer delight. "Oh, you little rascal!" she said. "I'll have to learn about sheep all over again, Da."

She glanced up at him and noted the wistful eagerness that came into his eyes, and the quick, unaccountable restraint that immediately masked them.

He sighed heavily. "It's no business for a woman, my girl."

"That's a man's opinion, Da," she countered. "And it's my opinion that a woman can talk a lot of damned nonsense, given the chance," her father retorted. "With the help of God, I'll be out of the business myself before another year."

"Out of sheep-raising?" "I'm going to sell," he told her. Autumn caught her breath with dismay. "Now who is talking nonsense? You'd die without all this—you know you would."

One of the sheep dogs, a graceful collie, came bounding up to them and Jarvis stooped to pat him. "I know, I know. But I'm getting too old for it, Autumn."

They moved to another pen and Autumn laid her hand affectionately on her father's arm. "I never heard anything so absurd in my life," she said, then decided to turn the conversation into another channel. "Now, that ewe, Da, is a Rambouillet, isn't it?"

Jarvis smiled appreciatively, drawn out in spite of himself. "I sent you to Europe to forget all that," he mused aloud. "But it's little you can do with a woman, it seems."

With a lighter heart, Autumn mounted her horse and rode beside her father up the steep trail that led back to the highway.

It was ten years or more since the Laird had opened his wide doors to the purposes of merry-making, and people had come from as far away as Kelowna to welcome his daughter's homecoming. The drawing room and the hall thundered with the lusty measures of a Highland schottische; Old Country folk stamped resolutely on the polished floors—middle-aged and elderly Scots, their gnarled faces scarlet and streaming, swung their partners with the earnestness of warriors going into battle. Not the least conspicuous and nimble-footed, and certainly the most terrifying of all, was old Absolom Peek, whose flaming red necktie rested companionably on the shoulder of his partner, Katie Macdougall.

Autumn stood near the doorway and applauded the efforts of the old sheep-herder, who beamed his gratitude and pursued his course more desperately than ever.

When the dance came to an end and the exhausted performers scattered to find chairs or to go out into the evening, two or three of the younger men hurried toward Autumn. One took her peremptorily by the arm and drew her aside.

"The next dance is ours, Miss Dean," he informed her a little complacently. "I have asked the orchestra to favor us with a tango."

Florian Parr was reputed to be the most dashing young man of the countryside. The Parrs, a wealthy Scotch family with a ranch in the Okanagan Valley, had left their son in England to complete his education and had brought him out a year after Autumn had left to join her Aunt Flo in the Old Country. Her father had introduced him to Autumn earlier in the evening and her eyes had surveyed him, with a penetration subtly careless, from head to foot. He was just under thirty, blond, tall, firmly knit, and dressed in white flannels and impeccably tailored blue sack coat. In that amusing medley of rustics and bland sophisticates who were her father's friends, Florian Parr stood out like a man from another world.

His manner was an immediate challenge to Autumn. "Our dance, Mr. Parr? I cannot recall making any engagements."

He stepped closer to her. "It is not so much a matter of engagement, Miss Dean, as it is—a matter of preference."

She laughed. "Yours—or mine, Mr. Parr?"

"I can only speak for myself," he replied.

She wrinkled her nose at him. "You seem to find little difficulty in that."

"Are you going to make this awkward?" he countered.

Autumn chuckled softly. "Not at all, Mr. Parr. Besides, I should think a man who plays polo and pilots his own plane—"

"A splendid alliteration," he put in. Before she could reply, he had swung her out upon the floor. The orchestra had already begun to play. The crystal chandeliers of the drawing room were turned off, and immediately the long floor was a dim pool of violet light from the colored lanterns that had been strung below the ceiling. Autumn noted the eyes that followed herself and Florian, shadowed eyes of envy or of admiration, and overheard one or two comments that were unequivocal. She permitted herself to drift in the joy of the dance, glancing up at her partner now and then with that rare, long look of half-closed eyes that is the liquid complement of that most subtly articulate of dances.

In the encore that followed the tango, Florian maneuvered so that they became separate from the main body of the dancers, and moved through the open French windows, out across the piazza and down the steps into the garden.

Florian leaned above her with one elbow resting on the bough of the tree. She saw him smile as he lifted a lock of her hair and pretended to peer at the moon through its mesh.

"Mr. Parr," she said, with mock severity, "I must remind you that

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"Hello, there!" a man's voice challenged her, a level voice, unhurried, its intonation rich and deep. As he drew closer Autumn could see that he was bareheaded, dressed in riding breeches and the collar of his dark shirt carelessly open.

"I am Autumn Dean," she announced quickly, as he came alongside her and halted his horse.

Although the moonlight made an obscure mask of his features, she thought she saw a look of puzzled surprise cross them.

"Autumn Dean!" he exclaimed, and extended his hand.

"Why—Bruce Landor! It is you, isn't it?"

Above their clasped hands, Autumn saw his smile—the boyish, quizzical smile she remembered.

"I was sure it was you—at once," he told her.

A thrill of uneasiness coursed through her—a queer, unsteady feeling that left her ridiculously irritated at herself.

"Why didn't you say so, then?" she demanded.

He held her hand warmly and smiled at her. "I have learned to take nothing for granted," he observed. "But—I understood you were celebrating over at your place tonight. How do you happen to be here?"

"I don't believe I could even explain that myself," she said a little blankly. "I just rode away, and I'm here."

He smiled again and took a cigarette from his breast pocket, struck a match and lighted it between his cupped hands. In that one brief moment she saw the dark, crisply curling hair that was cropped short, straight dark brows rather heavy above eyes that she remembered now were a deep blue, a nose well formed and sensitive about the nostrils, and a mouth that was somewhat full but straight-drawn and obstinate. In the sudden realization that she was giving him a shameful scrutiny, she wrenched her gaze away in the instant that he looked up at her.

"I had expected to see you over at our dance tonight," Autumn said. "Or were you not the least bit curious?"

"Curious?" He regarded her indently. "Scarcely—curious. I should have come if I had been able. This happens to be a very busy time for me—and besides, mother has taken another bad spell."

"Oh, I'm very sorry. Father told me she had been quite ill. I should have been over to see her if I had had time. Do you think she would remember me, Bruce?"

His eyes rested gravely upon her face. Her hand moved nervously to her cheek as his look held hers, the moonlight seeming to go thin and extraordinarily translucent between them.

"I doubt it," he said at last. "You are grown-up now."

"Won't you take me down to see her?"

"Now?"

"Why not? It's still early, and I can ride back that way. Unless, of course, she's asleep."

"She never goes to sleep until I come in," Bruce told her.

"I should love to go down, then," she said.

Bruce glanced once in the direction of the ravine. "I can come back here later," he said. "Let us go this way, then."

He led the way across the slope to a point from which the light in the Landor house was plainly visible.

"I hope you will not be shocked at mother's condition," he said. "She has had a stroke, you know, and it has left her partially paralyzed. She may not even remember your name."

"What a pity," Autumn said. "She was always such a proud, capable woman."

maimed in the war. The Odell women had been no respecters of hearts, old Hector had said. The Basque bell she winced suddenly and drew away from Florian. Was it for this, then, she had left behind her that life she had lived for the past nine years?

Casually, and without a word, she led Florian back into the rectangle of light from the open French windows, and a moment later they were among the dancers in the drawing room.

When the waltz had ended, Florian spoke a quiet word to her father and slipped away up the rear stairs to her own room.

Autumn knew not what mad impulse had possessed her to desert her father's guests and come out here to be alone on the silver-lit range. In her own room it had taken only a minute or two to change into her riding clothes, steal down again and out to the stables where she had saddled her horse, and come galloping away under the pallor of the night. Some yearning for escape, she knew, had prompted her act. She realized now that she had run away from Florian Parr. It was from the Florian Parrs she had run when she had left that shallow life she had known in Europe—the Florian Parrs, in whom deep passions were merely quaint and laughable.

She was well within the Landor ranch before she realized the direction she had taken. She had been sitting there for minutes, breathing deeply of the night's enchanted perfume, when a sound behind her caused her to draw sharply on the reins and wheel her horse about. Another rider was coming down the narrow trail, his form looming black and high against the moon.

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College Classics in Sports, Classroom, Dress-Up Clothes

By **CHERIE NICHOLAS**



IT IS intensely interesting to note the comradeship and co-operation that exists these days between merchantman, designer and the college girl as to the planning of a program of clothes that is practical first of all, at the same time they must date smartly for the varied types of activities that crowd the life of Miss Modern.

It was a happy inspiration that moved merchandiser and style creator to call into consultation groups of typical college girls, to take these young people into partnership, so to speak, in their efforts to assemble wardrobes of smart apparel that would meet the demands of every occasion in a thoroughly practical sense as well as a highly fashion-correct way.

In the illustration we are showing three apparel choices of a typical college girl who considers these clothes classics as indispensable for her alma mater. To be sure they simply represent the initial numbers that lay the foundation of a well organized wardrobe.

Centered in the picture Miss Collegiate is properly attired in a twin sweater set topping a circular plaid skirt plus the inevitable common-sense oxford. And here's something about plaids to keep in mind, you can't wear 'em too bright this season, the more red in their color scheme the better.

To the right in the picture this fair co-ed is wearing a skirt and sweater combination topped by a

classic water-proofed clan plaid coat with gabardine lining. Her sports hat of felt is a perfect college-girl type. She wears the typical saddle shoe. Have oxford and wool ankle sock. Have your sox initialed in fashion's latest message. You can know that the coat here pictured will attend football games this fall, which was in the mind of the designer who styled it with an idea for warmth and comfort as well as good "looks." This coat is likewise the type that will go to town often, will stand the test of motoring and prove a friend indeed throughout wind, rain, sunshine and the vagaries of weather that mark autumn and winter days.

Miss College Girl's choice to wear on a date with her best beau is a trim, very smart, very practical outfit in black as illustrated to the left in the group. Her crepe frock has the pinched-in waistline such as fashion demands this season; also the new back fullness. In her trunk she has tucked away one of the new detachable bustle bows which she wears now and then to add an extra note of chic to her frock. Her felt beret (small, it won't slip out of pose in dancing) has the new forward tilt and she brightens the whole with a flamboyant necklace and matching bracelet set in eye-trilling colored stones.

Not that choice must be restricted to a black dress with massive gold and colorful stone-set jewelry for keeping dress-up dates. To be sure the big idea is black for your autumn "first," but the gorgeous colors on the way are simply breathtaking. The new wool dresses and the very chic and fetching velveteen dresses make striking color their theme.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

Jeweled Buttons



Elegance is the keynote to fashions this fall and winter. Feminine whims and fancies add infinite charm to the mode. Seeing that we have gone back to the gay nineties for much of our inspiration it was inevitable that the vogue for big glittering jeweled buttons should be revived. And here they are glorifying the bolero suit of chartruse wool crepe as here pictured. The jeweled buttons of amethyst and gold are matched with a lapel ornament.

Fur and Flowers

Not just for spring was the flower trim which bloomed on your hat, for two French designers are showing velvety flowers on their newest fur hats.

Glacier White Is Latest Lace Tint

Glacier white, which has a pale bluish cast, was one of Patou's favorite colors for evening gowns in the most recent Paris showings, while Molyneux showed a vivid bright shade of blue. Molyneux not only did the new pencil-slim silhouette in lace, but made quite a sensation with his double-swung skirts for dance frocks, which were often ankle length. One of these in black lace had three flounces at the hem, with a deep square décolletage at the back edged with three ruffles. Another gown in the full-skirted group was in black net with a lace top.

In a gown by Patou with long, slim lines, fullness in the back was achieved by means of godets and the effect was quite sophisticated in lace over a silver princess slip.

Elegance Is Word For New Handbags

Handsome is the word for the new handbags. Even the bags carried with practical daytime costumes will sound a note of elegance in their general finish and fine mountings. Emphasis is on suede bags in interesting shapes and expert workmanship.

The more formal types announce revival of ornate frames, and many trimming touches in way of braiding and embroidery.

Evening bags are all aglitter with sequin handcraft, bead embroidery and other "whimsies" that tune to a song of elegance that will be heard throughout the winter social season.

Black Colors

Not content with the predominance of black in its own right as the popular color for fall costumes, Molyneux adds black tones to many of his other colors.

Smart Designs for Women Who Sew

DIAGRAM that's just about as comfortable as a house dress can be—with unbelted waistline, deep armholes, plain neckline, and an absolute absence of foldovers. The princess lines make it beautifully slim. As you see from the diagram, you can finish this easy pattern (1798) in just a few hours.

For the Great Outdoors. Gay and winning as the lilt of the "Skater's Waltz" is this sports suit for juniors, with its snug, bell-



hop jacket and extravagantly swirling skirt. It includes a bewitching little hood, too. If you're young and lively and love the great outdoors, then you'll want 1673, even if you never wear a skate—whether roller or ice!

The Patterns. No. 1798 is designed for sizes 14, 16, 18, 20, 42 and 44. Size 16 requires 4 1/2 yards of 35-inch material without nap; 2 yards of braided.

No. 1673 is designed for sizes 11, 13, 15 and 17. Size 13 requires 1 1/4 yards of 54-inch material for long-sleeved jacket and 1 1/2 yards of 39-inch material to line; 1/2 yard of 54-inch material to line; 2 1/2 yards of 54-inch material for skirt.

Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., Room 1324, 211 W. Wacker Dr., Chicago, Ill. Price of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

(Bell Syndicate—WNU Service.)

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONS

Better Waffles.—The flavor of waffles is enhanced by the simple addition of the grated rind of two lemons to the batter.

For Cooking in the Open.—Two fires often are more convenient than one. One may be used for the coffee and the other for roasting or frying.

For Rust on Porch Lamp.—To remove rust on metal porch lamps rub them with fine sandpaper or steel wool and then apply a thin coat of lubricating oil.

Encouraging Diligence.—Make a list of duties for the young masculine member of the family to follow in cleaning his room. The business of checking them off each day gives him a sense of importance that encourages diligence.

NERVOUS?

Do you feel so nervous you want to scream? Are you cross and irritable? Do you scold those dearest to you?

If your nerves are on edge and you feel you need a good general system tonic, try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, made especially for women.

For over 60 years one woman has told another how to go "smiling thru" with reliable Pinkham's Compound. It helps nature build up more physical resistance and thus helps calm quivering nerves and lessen discomfort from annoying symptoms which often accompany female functional disorders.

Why not give it a chance to help YOU? Over one million women have written in reporting wonderful benefits from Pinkham's Compound.

Time Saver Method will teach you to win time.—Goethe.