



Honeymoon Mountain

By Frances Shelley Wees

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CHAPTER IX—Continued
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All the time she had felt lost and forlorn and alone, because this was Bryn's world and Bryn's life, a modern sophisticated pageant in which she had no part; and because it made her see how drab and dull and uninteresting her own life of cucumber frames and brook trout and made-over clothes must be to him.

And all his talk about knitting, and winter evenings by the hearth, and the kittens he would get for her . . . all his interest in that simple sort of thing was pretended for her sake. Bryn was a gentleman, and he lived up to his bargains to the last pencil stroke. Not by word or suggestion would he let her discover how bored and dull he was going to find the rest of his year here on the mountain, nor with what difficulty he was going to earn the money she would pay him.

Deborah slept very little that night. Life, that only yesterday had seemed so beautiful and serene, was becoming complicated and unhappy. There didn't seem to be anything ahead but more difficulties and a lonely unhappy time. Because Bryn would go back to Pilar when the year was up, and when he did, there wouldn't be anybody at all. Nobody could ever be like Bryn, even if he were only pretending. But there would have been a way to make him stop pretending, Deborah knew, because if he went on like this, even though the look in his eyes was only the tenderness one feels for a child, or a lost puppy, she wasn't going to be able to bear it when at the end of the year he drove out of the big gates to leave her forever.

The morning was cold and grey, although the rain had stopped at dawn. Deborah had them lay a fire in the small sitting room downstairs, so that Grandmother might not feel a chill. There, when breakfast was over, Pilar and Madeline and Sally and Grandmother and herself were sitting. The three men were outside.

Pilar, in a beautiful dress of some very fine woolen material in a dark crimson color, sat beside the doorway with her feet out on a low stool and a long cigarette holder between her fingers. She could see up into the orchard, too, and Deborah noticed that her eyes went to Bryn frequently, although she gave no sign. Grandmother was in a low chair beside the fire, listening to Pilar with the same fascinated interest she had shown last night, watching her, taking in every perfect detail of her grooming.

"I hope you don't mind my coming here uninvited like this, Mrs. Larned," she was saying in her low voice. "I found myself completely deserted and lonely and I couldn't stand it any longer."

"My dear, you are more than welcome," Grandmother said warmly. "Any friends of Bryn's are our friends, too, and our home is always open to them. And I am delighted to hear you discussing details of modern society. I am sure your talk will be a liberal education for Deborah, and help her to establish herself more easily when she goes out into Bryn's world with him."

Pilar's black eyes rested momentarily on Deborah. They were quite expressionless. "There will be no difficulties for Deborah," she said tenderly. "She is so adorable that she won't need to make the slightest effort. Everyone will fall in love with her at first sight."

"Just as Bryn did," Sally added, and looked fleetingly at Pilar.

"Just as Bryn did," Pilar repeated, but her mouth tightened a little, Deborah saw, at the corners.

"How long are you planning to stay, Pilar?" Madeline said evenly. "Are you going home for the yacht races?"

"I really hadn't considered it. I wasn't sure I'd be invited to stay, you see."

Grandmother gave a little sigh. "I am so thankful that when Deborah does emerge into society she will have dear Bryn to take care of her. He understands so well what her life has been, and he is so thoughtful and loving. It takes a great load off my mind to have him so."

"Bryn has always been a dear," Pilar agreed at once. "I don't know what I should ever have done without Bryn," she went on. "For years, now, he has been my staunchest comrade. No matter in what difficulty I found myself, there was always Bryn, and he brought me all his troubles and joys as well. It delights my heart to know that he is happy."

Deborah did not move. Grand-

mother lifted her eyes and looked at Pilar frankly. "You modern girls are so honest and open," she said. "In my day a girl would never have dared to make such a statement about a man. She would have been afraid of being misunderstood."

"Misunderstood?" Pilar murmured, flicking open the lighter.

"In my day," Grandmother explained, "there were few young men such as our dear Bryn, so handsome, so eligible in every way, so fine. If a girl had been his friend always, as you have been, my child, then she would have been expected to marry him, and, indeed, she would herself have expected to marry him. I do not quite understand the new camaraderie which allows of such close friendships without any thought of marriage or romantic love. In my day, so queerly uncontrolled was human nature then, the sort of friendship you mention would have been potentially dangerous if either the girl or the man—particularly the man—married elsewhere."

Pilar's eyes narrowed the faintest trifle against the light as she looked at Grandmother. Grandmother was sitting up a little straighter than Deborah had seen her sit for some time, and there was a little pink in her cheeks. But her eyes as they met Pilar's were calm and kind, and Deborah pushed away the thought that Grandmother suspected something and was taking her own way to combat the hint of danger.

Pilar rose and stood for a moment, tall and lissome and full of grace, beside the door. She was smiling. "Customs are very different now," she murmured, and begged to be excused, and went out through the door.

There was a little silence when Pilar was gone. Deborah looked up from the puppy to find Grandmother stitching away placidly again, her eyes on her material, and Sally and Madeline looking at each other with steady meaning. Sally and Madeline didn't understand. They didn't know what it must have been like for Pilar to love Bryn, to have loved him for years, and then to have him suddenly marry another girl. They didn't know what it meant to love Bryn. Simon and Tubby were all right, of course, and perfect darlings, but they weren't Bryn. Deborah's eyes burned, and the bad lump came back in her throat.

There was a knock at the door. It was one of the maids, wanting Deborah. The cook would like her orders, the maid said respectfully. Deborah went out and shut the door behind her.

Deborah stumbled down the hall toward the kitchen. In her mind's eye she could see herself sitting on the wall the other night, with Bryn leaning close beside her. She remembered what she had wanted to do. Bryn's face was so close, and he was such a dear; she had wanted to take his face between her own two palms and bend down and put her cheek against his forehead. She had almost done it when he said . . . "Deborah, do you like me . . . at all?" But now she was glad she hadn't done it, because he wouldn't have wanted her to. It was Pilar he loved. He had said so. He had told her how dearly he loved this other girl . . . and if she hadn't been so blind she would have seen instantly that his telling her of the other girl was sure proof that he didn't love her, Deborah.

And if he did love Pilar so dearly, then Pilar was a very lovely person. Madeline and Sally didn't like her, but they didn't understand. And Bryn's heart must ache, now, to think that he was shut away from Pilar for so long; and Pilar must be suffering dreadfully.

When she was finished in the kitchen, Deborah went up the back stairs swiftly and along the hall to her room. Someone came lightly along the hall, and she caught her breath lest it should be Bryn. But it was, instead, Pilar; and she was in search of Deborah, for her own room was down in the other wing with Grandmother's. She glanced in through the open door.

"Ah, there you are, sweetie," she said. "I wondered if you'd run away. Where've you been?"

"I was down in the kitchen," Deborah explained, praying that her voice sounded as usual. "Then I came up to get some embroidery. I find myself with no work at all to do these days."

Pilar was watching her. "You are refreshing," she sighed. "But really, Deborah, you must begin to make some changes in your life, or you will be completely bewildered by Bryn's gay world. Bryn travels pretty fast, dear."

Deborah sat down slowly, with

the Italian embroidery in her hand. She fingered it absently. "Hasn't Bryn explained it all to you, Pilar?" she asked at last, lifting her dark eyes.

"Explained what?" Pilar asked, after a moment.

"I know he . . . hasn't told the others. Sally, or Madeline. I don't think even Tubby knows. I'm not quite sure why he hasn't. For a while I thought it was on his own account, but now I think he has been doing it for me, so that I wouldn't feel so queer and left out."

"I don't know what you mean."

Deborah looked at her.

"You know that Bryn couldn't be in love with me," she said.

Pilar did not move. Not by a flicker did her expression change. Her eyes were black and fathomless.

"Not in love with you?" she repeated.

"Surely you knew, Pilar?"

"Even if I did," Pilar said softly, "you wouldn't expect me to . . . mention it, Deborah?"

"No," Deborah said after a moment. At Pilar's words her heart had fallen like lead. So Pilar did know. Bryn had told her.

"Bryn, of course, is a gentleman," Pilar said. "He does not tell any more than is necessary."

"No," Deborah said again. "But I can tell you, Pilar. I can explain to you."

"I was . . . hoping you would."

"I don't want to go into detail," Deborah said. "I think I can tell you in just a few words. It was like this. I had to be married by my twenty-first birthday or lose my grandfather's estate. I went down to San Francisco to meet the man I was to marry. He was . . . I couldn't possibly marry him. And Bryn came along by accident, and saw that I was frightened, and I told him about it, and he offered to marry me instead. That's all."

Pilar straightened. "I see," she said, and then, "The day I came, Tubby dragged me away and threatened me with murder if I called Bryn by anything but Graham. The man you were to marry is named Graham?"

"Yes."

"Your grandmother thinks Bryn is the man?"

"Yes."

"And what happens next?"

There was a queer note in her voice, and Deborah looked up quickly. But Pilar's face had not changed, and Deborah's eyes fell again. "Nothing," she said. "We have to go on until the end of the year, or I do not get the money. The marriage must last for a year. And it must go on for Grandmother's sake, anyway, for that long. After that . . . I don't know what we shall do to explain to Grandmother, but there will be something. Bryn will be free, then, of course."



"But I think you are being inconsistent," Deborah said.

year, or I do not get the money. The marriage must last for a year. And it must go on for Grandmother's sake, anyway, for that long. After that . . . I don't know what we shall do to explain to Grandmother, but there will be something. Bryn will be free, then, of course."

"You cannot get the money within a year?"

"If the marriage is not successful to that extent," Deborah explained carefully, "I do not get it at all."

"Your grandmother seems very fond of Bryn."

"She loves him," Deborah said, with a little catch in her breath. "He is wonderful to her. Even if the estate were not so tied, I don't see how we could be . . . divorced . . . before that time without breaking Grandmother's heart."

Pilar turned the ivory holder between her long browned fingers. "It seems rather a long time out of Bryn's life," she said. "A year."

"I know."

"I should think there might have been somebody else, Deborah. Somebody you might have paid for his name and his lost year."

Deborah looked up again, but did not speak. Pilar was watching her. After a moment she said, "Of course it's all very romantic, and you are really quite pretty. Any man would like to be the prince who awakens the sleeping beauty."

Deborah's eyes flew to the long oval of Pilar's face. Her own cheeks crimsoned furiously, and her eyes flashed.

"I don't know quite what you are suggesting," she said icily, "but I think you are being insulting."

"Not at all," Pilar replied. "I am merely trying to discover Bryn's reason for this quixotic posture. It certainly cannot be that he is willing to spend a year with you for your platonic companionship. Debo-

rah. Obviously, you are not suited to be a companion to him. You have not the sophistication, the knowledge of his world. You scarcely speak his language. You say he does not love you; I think that would be impossible, too. There must be companionship in real love, an equality. But I think I do begin to see his reason. There you were, beauty in distress . . . and Bryn was always fond of a new adventure. Something new, something nobody has ever done before. Yes, it becomes quite clear to me. And he would get considerable enjoyment out of this play-acting to your grandmother, this pretense of being simple and bucolic, this pretense of loving you. It is rather an interesting situation, as I must admit."

Deborah was staring at her. "I don't think I care to discuss it any further," she said quietly, "if you don't mind, Pilar."

"There isn't much more to say, is there? Except that I suppose I ought to thank you for explaining it to me. Deborah, I have been . . . troubled. You can understand."

Deborah folded her linen. "Yes," she said.

"Bryn is very difficult," Pilar sighed. "I think this has been the worst fright he has given me. But once, two years ago, I was nearly mad, too. He was in Tibet, and I didn't hear from him for nearly six months. It was reported that he was dead. Of course, he wasn't. But he was just living in a native tribe, living like a native, to get the atmosphere, he said. He's wildly interested in people, different kinds of people, the farther from his own kind, the better. But he always comes back in the end, I have discovered that. And when he came back from Tibet," she said with a smile, "he brought me my ring. This ruby. Isn't it a beauty?"

The ruby flashed and glowed on her finger as she held it out for Deborah to see. "It is very lovely," Deborah said gently.

Gary tapped on the door-casing. "Miss Deborah, please," he said. "Mr. Bryn would like a dry pair of shoes. Bryn will go through and get them."

"Certainly, Gary."

With a little half bow to Pilar he sidled past her and opened the door on the left. He pushed it back and left it open as he went in, and Pilar, glancing through, saw the narrow white bed against the other wall. She turned deliberately and looked at Deborah's closed bedroom door, and then, with a deep breath, she looked at Deborah and smiled.

"It's all very romantic, isn't it?" she said, and went swiftly across to the hall door. "Thank you for telling me, Deborah. It makes rather a difference."

Bryn had been over in the stable talking to Joe, who came to milk every evening, a cow having been added to their possessions.

As he approached the bridge his eyes caught the flutter of a skirt, and his heart turned a complete double somersault. If he had been in any need of proof as to his emotional condition, he had it then. But the skirt did not belong to Deborah; it was much too sophisticated a skirt for that, as he saw at second glance, and his heart settled down sady into a recumbent position again, and he went forward without interest to meet Pilar.

She was standing in the middle of the bridge, leaning over the railing to look into the water. Bryn stopped beside her, put his elbows on the railing, and gazed down into the brook, too, without a word. Pilar turned, after a moment, and smiled at him; the flashing brilliant smile that was peculiarly her own, that no one else could duplicate. "You know," she said, "I don't blame you for burying yourself away up here, Bryn. It's so far back in Nature that I don't suppose you've ever had quite the same experience before, have you?"

Bryn glanced down at her. Her black eyes, liquid and melting, met his. Her lips were very red.

"No," he replied. "Never."

There was a little silence. They stood together, elbows touching. After a moment Pilar said softly, "Deborah told me her story today."

"Deborah?" he repeated.

"She seemed to think I ought to be told, Bryn."

"Oh."

The black eyes opened wide again. "Had you . . . talked to her about me?"

"Never," Bryn said promptly.

"Oh," Pilar murmured. "I had an idea you had, perhaps. She certainly knew that we had been friends for a long time. Of course, that may be obvious. Whatever she knew, she wanted me to understand just what the situation was between you. Dear, quaint little thing! She is such a child, isn't she?"

"Is she?"

"So naive. I was quite touched."

"What did she say the . . . situation was between us, then?"

"Why, simply, that this wasn't as all of us thought, a love match after all. That it was simply a marriage de convenience. I don't quite know why you, of all people, Bryn, had to tangle yourself in it. You may have difficulty in getting free again."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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"Open kettle" canning is recommended only for fruits, tomatoes, preserves, relishes, etc., and only one jar must be filled at a time with the boiling product, and then sealed immediately. The "hot" or "cold pack" method simply means that the product is cooked directly in the jars. For "hot pack" food is precooked a short period of time and then packed hot into the jars. For "cold pack" food is pre-cooked, then cold-dipped and packed into jars, or packed right in the jars cold without precooking.

The product for canning should be carefully selected and thoroughly cleaned. Small fruits and berries are usually packed into the jars raw, a hot sirup added to within one and one-half inches of the top, caps adjusted, and the jars processed. Vegetables are precooked for a few minutes and packed into the jars while hot, the caps adjusted and the filled jars gotten into the canner immediately for processing.

It is also important to know how to handle the type of jar cap that you are using correctly. For the self-sealing cap, which consists of screw band and lid, place lid on the jar with sealing composition next to the glass, and screw the band firmly tight. Because this cap does not seal until the contents of the jar are cold, the self-sealing cap is always tightened down firmly before the jars are placed in the canner to process. At the end of the processing period the jars with the self-sealing caps are removed from the canner and set right side up to cool. There is no further tightening of the cap. Twenty-four hours after the canning is done the screw band may be removed and jars stored away.

When using the zinc top jars, jars are only partly sealed before placing in the cooker, and processed immediately. At the end of processing time, remove from the cooker, one at a time, and seal immediately. When jars are cold, invert for two or three hours, then examine for leaks.

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NIX, JOE. IF YOU GO IN, WE DO TOO.

WELL, I SUPPOSE NOW I OUGHTA LET YOU KIDS GET YOUR THINGS OUT OF THE SHACK. COME BACK SATURDAY. GET OUT NOW, THOUGH.

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