



SYNOPSIS

Victoria Herrendeen, a vivacious little girl, had been too young to feel the shock that came when her father, Keith Herrendeen, lost his fortune. A gentle, unobtrusive soul, he is now employed as an obscure chemist in San Francisco, at a meager salary. His wife, Magda, cannot adjust herself to the change. She is a beautiful woman, fond of pleasure and a magnet for men's attention. Magda and Victoria have been down at a summer resort and Keith leaves for a bridge party, excusing himself for being such a "runaway." Later that night Victoria is grief-stricken when she hears her mother's weeping. The Herrendeens return to their small San Francisco apartment. Keith does not approve of Magda's mad social life and they quarrel frequently. Magda receives flowers and a diamond from Ferdie Manners, a wealthy man from Argentina whom she had met less than a week before. Manners arrives a few hours later. Magda takes Victoria to Nevada to visit a woman friend who has a daughter named Catherine. There she tells her she is going to get a divorce. Victoria soon is in boarding school with her friend Catherine. Magda marries Manners and they spend two years in Argentina. Victoria has studied in Europe and at eighteen she visits her mother when Ferdie rents a beautiful home. Magda is unhappy over Ferdie's drinking and attentions to other women. Vic dislikes him, but for her mother's sake is nice to him. When her mother and stepfather return to South America, Victoria refuses to go with them because of Ferdie's unwelcome attentions to her. Magda returns and tells Vic she and Ferdie have separated. Meanwhile Keith has remarried. Victoria is now a student nurse. Magda has fallen in love with Lucius Farmer, a married artist. While she and Vic prepare for a trip to Europe, Ferdie takes a suite in their hotel.

CHAPTER IV—Continued

She was silent, staring into space with narrowed, somber eyes that were reddened with tears.

"Mummy, I have to remind you that Ferdie's coming up today. He has tickets and things, he said."

"Can you talk to him, Vicky darling? Do, that's a lamb," Magda said gayly. "Tell him I had to go down to Burlingame—and that I felt terribly..." Magda was rummaging about in a bureau drawer; she spoke absently. "Today and tomorrow are our last days," she said. And presently she gave Vicky an absent-minded kiss and was gone.

It was five o'clock when Victoria got home; Magda had evidently preceded her by only a few minutes and was lying flat on her bed.

"Vic, we had a very serious talk this morning, you poor chicken, and I've been thinking about you all day," Magda said, her eyes rounded over her teacup. "I'll tell you what's happened, and what we decided. We're not children, this isn't a first affair, and there are a great many other persons to consider. So... So—the upshot of it all is, Vic, that you and I sail on Saturday, and that it's all over!"

Magda was a little subdued and pale in the morning, but showed no other signs of her recent emotion; the day was exciting with final purchases, much talk of wardrobes and plans.

Vic wandered out to the balcony, looked down at the waterfront over which the mist was softly closing. Through the cold dusk the fog horns were steadily sounding.

"Horrible weather to go through the Gate."

"What makes you say that?" Magda asked, looking up from her letter.

"Heavy fog. You can't see the Konaile. Maybe that's she, going along now. I hope Ferdie made her!"

"They'd wait for Ferdie. They may not even sail. What is this, darling—the eighteenth?"

"Tomorrow's the twentieth."

"Of course!" Magda reached for the trailing telephone. "Tell Mr. Farmer to come up," she said immediately. And then to Vic, "I'm going out with him for just a little while."

"Call me if I'm asleep when you get back!" Vic answered, going toward her room. She heard Lucius' voice a few moments later; her mother's voice. "One more day of this," she said to herself.

Vic awakened with a start, with a sense of something wrong. The telephone was ringing, and someone was knocking at the door. The room was filled with dusk and fear and confusion.

At the door it was Otto, with the dinner card. On the telephone was Mollie Jervis, saying good-by. Victoria answered both claims; ordered oyster stew and brown toast and meringues; snapped up lights. But she still felt frightened and bewildered; her forehead sticky with perspiration; her throat thick.

"Goodness, what horrible dreams!" She went to her mother's door, saw only dusk and confusion and emptiness within. "She's late,"

Vic yawned, seeing a clock's hands at seven. "Maybe she's taking a bath."

The bathroom was empty, too. Perhaps Mother was going to have one last dinner with her Lucius. Perhaps she had left a note somewhere; it might be in her rooms.

Victoria went in there, lighted lights. She saw the note on the dressing table, a large square note addressed to "Vic." And even before her eyes reached its first words "My darling darling, you must forgive me..." somehow she knew. "I never thought of this!" she whispered aloud, in the tumbled desolation that seemed now like a deserted battlefield, like an ocean after a wreck.

Her glance went on. She saw the word "Tahiti," the word "Malolo," the words "snatch our few years of heaven..."

Victoria went to the balcony and sat down in a green iron chair. Her legs had failed under her; she felt cold, but her face was burning. One trembling hand clung tight to the note; in the empty hotel rooms behind her the lights shone brightly over the packed handsome trunks, with their bands of white and blue.

Coming into the diet kitchen at six o'clock on a summer morning, Florence Flood Dickenson discovered it empty, except for a solitary figure at the end of the long table.

The girl raised her head and showed a weary face that was yet keen with sensitiveness and sympathy and lighted with a tired smile.

"Hello, Dicky," she said, in a hoarse sweet voice.

"Oh, is it you, Herrendeen?" Miss Dickenson asked. "Have a nice vacation?"

"Marvelous. How's everything gone?"

"Oh, beautifully. We missed you, of course, but everything's gone marvelously."

Two probationers came in with trays. A boy put his head in the door, said, "Miss Rockwood?" and vanished. The hospital day had begun.

"Vicky, tell me, do you like Dr. Hardisty?" Louise Mary Keating asked interestedly, a few days later.

"Very much," Vicky said abstractedly.

"Vicky, I'll bet you're in love with him! They say every woman he meets is in love with him." Miss Keating bit into a chocolate; looked at its filling thoughtfully. "I oughtn't to touch these," she said.

"I'll bet Vic hates to give up the Keats kid," Helen Ger observed, watching her. "You won't see Dr. Hardisty any more now after tonight, Vic."

"Well, as a matter of fact, I will," Vicky said, beginning to smear her face with cold cream, after tying a towel over her tawny hair. "When little Kate Keats goes home I go with her. I've been there before, you know, and Mrs. Keats asked me yesterday to come back. Her mother isn't very well, and if she goes away with the doctor she always leaves a nurse with the children."

"And then you will see Dr. Hardisty every day, Vic?"

"Not every day. But they're great friends. A lot of good it will do me to fall in love with Quentin Hardisty," Victoria went on practically. "He doesn't know I exist."

The Keats home stood out on Pacific avenue with the long lines of the Presidio eucalyptus trees and the Golden Gate below the drawing room's northeast windows, and a sweeping view of the bay and the mountains that framed the bay from the upper floors.

Victoria liked the atmosphere of the house; she said it reminded her of a book.

Victoria, who had gone to them from the hospital as Kate's nurse, had been kept on after Kate's recovery because of Duna's scarlet fever, and after that because of the feeble age of Mrs. Chauncey Clements, the children's English grandmother. Gently, agreeably, without any unpleasantness, Granny was dying. Victoria had a small room next to the old woman's luxurious one on the first bedroom floor, and the easy task of watching her dignified departure from a life in which she had behaved for eighty years with admirable decorum.

Violet Keats was in her early forties; her husband perhaps ten years older. She adored the small, blinking man with his fluffy gray mop "as only an English gentleman can adore a man," Vic told Catherine.

"We're dining alone, Victoria, you and I," Mrs. Keats said one day, in her crisp, brisk way. "I want to talk to you!"

It was when they were seated at the little table downstairs an hour

later that she made a first attack upon Victoria's confidence. "You're so perfectly charming with the children that I shan't feel quite happy until you're in a fair way to have a few of your own," she said.

"Not!" Vic smiled, shaking her head.

"You don't mean that. No girl means that!"

"Most girls don't, I daresay. But I do. I've had a queer education along those lines," Victoria added, half to herself.

"You mean your mother's life?"

"Not only Mother. But all her crowd, all women who make love, passion, so important, who persuade you, or almost persuade you, that it is right to go wherever your heart goes. It's all so artless."

"You ought to set your cap for Quentin, Vic. He's as completely disillusioned as you are."

"Dr. Hardisty?"

"Certainly he is. In his heart he despises women. He thinks—Johnny tells me that he thinks that they're all alike—weak and selfish and ready to break up anything or anybody's life for a little pleasure."

"Did he tell Dr. Keats that?"

"That's the impression he always gives."

"That amazes me," Victoria said, "because if ever any man had his way with women it is Dr. Quentin Hardisty!"

"Yes, but it doesn't mean anything, Vic."

"You knew his first wife?"

"Very well. I'd left her—or rather she'd left me downtown about ten minutes before she was killed. She was driving her own car—she drove like a crazy woman, everything she did was wild, and she had this crash. They got her to the hospital and poor little Gwen was born an hour later. Quentin's wife was a terrible girl—rich and spoiled and—oh, I don't know, flighty. He's never been very happy, poor boy!—There's Johnny at the door now, Vicky," she broke off to say, "Ah, and Quentin with him—come in both of you—are you frozen, have you had anything to eat?"

"We're starving!" Dr. Hardisty, shedding outer garments in the hall, said in his deep voice. "Vicky'll go get us some eggs, won't you, Vicky?"

"Better than that," Victoria said. "We've put it aside—we expected this."

She went away and presently, when a maid had preceded her with a card table and silver and glasses, returned with a laden tray.

"You looked very charming with that baby in your arms," he said abruptly. Victoria and he were alone now; the men had had their supper; the fire had burned down

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"You think so?" Vic asked, her face red.

"I do." Quite suddenly, quite simply his arm was about her and, for the first time in her life, a man kissed her on the lips. "There!" he said and laughed. In another instant he was gone.

"Seriously, and all this teasing aside, would you come over to the shack for Saturday and Sunday?" he asked her a few weeks later.

Instantly she knew now that she ought to say no. But the temptation to yield was strong. For, after all, his was the most fascinating and popular figure in San Francisco's social circle at the time, and weekend invitations to the shabby little cabin in Mill Valley were eagerly sought.

Mill Valley would be thrilling! After all, Quentin had shown that he regretted his craziness, and when he was in one of his nice, simple moods she liked him quite as much as she detested him in all his other ones.

All this flashed through her mind as she hesitated over the invitation, smiling.

"You said I would, you know, and I will!" she told him, simply.

"And I think you are a sport!" he answered, in his pleasantest manner. "It'll be rough, you know."

"I can be very rough. Only I don't go in for cocktails and staying up dancing to the radio until morning," she began.

"Nothing like that. 'Rough' means that I have only one Chinese boy there and he doesn't know much about cooking, and that the chief entertainment will be a long climb up the mountain on Sunday."

"And can the beautiful Mrs. Pool go in for all that?"

"The beautiful Mrs. Pool will not be there. This will be a very simple party. Just four of us."

"It sounds good. Who's going along to protect my youth and innocence?" Victoria smiled.

"Do you think Chase and Dora Upham might manage it?"

"They might."

"I'll pick you up at four o'clock on Saturday, then. Bring comfortable shoes."

At four o'clock Saturday they drove to the ferry and were carried, motorcar and all, across the flowing gray waters of the bay. There was fog on the bay, and Tamalpais was wreathed in fog; but down in the valley a misty sunlight was shining.

Up through a shady tunnel of redwoods the winding road rose above the Cascades and mounted the great stony flank of the mountain. On a spur of land pushing boldly westward toward the far glitter of the sea the plain little brown cabin stood. The ground all about it was deep in pine needles; the air was aromatic with their sweet, sharp scent. Descending from the car, the girl admitted that her first impulse was to give a long, loud scream of pure delight.

CHAPTER V

A lean Chinese boy in a coolie coat of blue, with dingy white trousers and padded rope shoes, was carrying the provisions out of sight. Vic and the man went into the big, main room that constituted almost the entire cabin.

At both sides of it were raised wide alcoves with windows; thick blue canvas curtains could shut them off from the main room. Each of these contained three beds, chests, chairs; opening from each was a large shower bath casually constructed of brown planks, with redwood fronds pushing their way in between the walls and the roof.

In the main room were rugs, big chairs, tables from which books and magazines cascaded, an enormous fireplace smoked high from many a roaring blaze, lamps, cushions on a deep davenport; all of the comfortable, informal litter dear to the bachelor heart. Window doors opened on a flagged terrace behind which the magnificent crest of the mountain reared against the softly encroaching fog.

"We have our meals out here on the terrace all summer," the doctor said. "But it's going to be too cold tonight. Mock Suey!" he shouted suddenly. The Chinese silently padded into sight. "Eat by fire tonight?"

"No. Too muchee catchem cole tellis. Eat fire."

"Fi-ah," the Oriental conceded in a sad, liquid voice. The boy melted away.

Victoria began to wonder when the Uphams would arrive.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Two Things Certain

Benjamin Franklin is credited with being the first to make the statement that only two things are certain—death and taxes. Franklin mentioned this certainty in a letter to his friend, M. Leroy of the French Academy of Sciences, in 1789. He stated: "Our Constitution is in actual operation. Everything appears to promise that it will last; but in this world nothing is certain but death and taxes."

Whether the expression was original with Franklin is unknown but it was natural for him to contrast the uncertainties of the newly adopted Constitution with these two certainties. Charles Dickens in his "David Copperfield," written 60 years later, has Barkis say: "It was as true as taxes is. And nothing's truer than them."

Is Overweight a Disease?

By DR. JAMES W. BARTON
© Bell Syndicate.—WNU Service.

JUST as yellow fever, malaria, diabetes, pernicious anaemia and other "incurable" diseases have been conquered in recent years by our scientific research physicians, so also will obesity—overweight—be conquered within the next few years.

For, after all, obesity is really a disease—some deficiency somewhere in the body—just as with diabetes and pernicious anaemia.

Time after time metabolism tests have been made of overweights (that is the rate at which the body processes work) and except in a very few thyroid or gland cases—perhaps 2 or 3 in every 100—the body processes in overweights were not working.

Dr. G. Hetenyi, in German Archives of Clinical Medicine, thinks that there is something wrong with the collection and distribution of fat in the bodies of those who are overweight. He investigated the mobilization or gathering together of the fat at the depots or storage places in overweights and in normal individuals, when both types were eating insufficient food for their needs.

He found that there was something wrong or different with the way fat was gathered and stored in the bodies of overweights.

Then he studied the way the fat and the normal individuals handled the blood rich in fat from food, and observed that the tissues of overweights have a great avidity—eagerness or desire—for fats that enter the blood stream. In other words as the blood rich in fat passed through the tissues of fat individuals, these tissues were "hungry" for fat and so a great amount of the fat in the blood was taken from the blood and stored in the fat tissues. On the other hand in those of normal weight, their tissues did not seem so hungry for fat and so the fat laden blood passed through without leaving much if any fat.

What an Investigator Learned.

Dr. Hetenyi also studied the relation between fever and fat mobilization from the deposits of fat, the action of dehydration (cutting down on liquids) on the fat in the blood, and finally the resorption into the blood of fat put under the skin by a hypodermic needle or syringe.

He found out that the increase in the blood fat (fat taken from the fat depots) was slight in overweights, was less than in those of normal weight. This means then that during an illness when there is an increase in the temperature of the body, the tissues of overweights did not give up as much fat to the blood proportionately as did those of normal weight.

And finally the blood in overweights did not take into itself as much of the fat that was placed in the body by the hypodermic needle as did the blood in those of normal weight. It practically left this extra fat stay where it was.

The conclusions drawn from the above experiments are that the mobilization or collection of fat from its storage depots—the skin, the liver, in and about the abdominal organs—is reduced in overweights, whereas their absorption of fat from the blood passing through their tissues is greatly increased.

In other words, fat individuals take more fat from the blood when fat is being eaten, and less from their depots when no fat is being eaten than do the tissues of those of normal weight.

Overweight—obesity—is therefore a disease of fat mobilization—the way fat is gathered and distributed.

Now while this knowledge that their tissues are "different" in the way fat is handled in the body—whether the fat is due to eating starch or fat foods—may make overweights feel a little less responsible for their increased bulk, nevertheless there is no reason why they should not reduce their weight.

Gall Bladder Disorders.

It has been definitely proven that two of every three individuals have more or less disturbance in the gall bladder and yet the number of cases that actually require draining or removal of the gall bladder is very small.

Dr. R. F. Carter, New York City, in Annals of Surgery, says that during a period of four years in studying patients having disease of the gall bladder the medical and surgical clinic of the New York Post Graduate Hospital has gradually come to realize the importance of changes in the size and shape of the gall bladder. In patients with definite gall bladder symptoms—pain in the upper right abdomen, gas on the stomach, nausea, tenderness in abdomen—even when the X-ray showed no stones present and the gall bladder filled and emptied normally, real disease was found at operation.

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Good Hybrid Corn Needs Good Soil

Better Varieties Equipped to Produce on Highly Fertile Land.

By A. L. Lang, Assistant Chief, Soil Experiment Fields, University of Illinois.—WNU Service.

With farmers preparing to plant a record acreage of hybrid seed corn this year, they are advised that good hybrids need good soil.

Because of the accumulation of the many desirable characteristics in the better strains of hybrid corn, the good hybrids are more adapted and better equipped to produce high yields on highly fertile soils than are the common open-pollinated varieties.

Good hybrids need good soil not because they are unable to produce on poor soil, but because they have the ability to utilize more effectively the materials found in fertile soil.

A corn grower can not expect to grow 90-bushel or 100-bushel corn on 30-bushel land, and he may be wasting high quality seed if he tries it. On the other hand if he has high quality soil capable of producing big crops, he is wasteful if he does not use seed good enough to make full use of the land.

One good feature of corn improvement by hybrid breeding, is that superior hybrids may make it possible to obtain much larger returns from good systems of soil improvement than has been possible in the past. In other words a farmer need no longer fear that he is getting his land too good for his seed.

However, hybrid corn can not be expected to take the backache out of spreading limestone nor to serve as a substitute for crop rotations and applications of manure and fertilizer.

Carry Over Filled Silo Is a Timely Suggestion

Many successful stock farmers have for years made it a practice to carry over a supply of corn or grain for their live stock; especially is this true in sections of the country where crop failures are not uncommon. "Carry over a crib of corn" has been a favorite slogan. The last two widespread and destructive drouths have proven the wisdom