

CHERRY SQUARE

A NEIGHBOURLY NOVEL
by GRACE S. RICHMOND

Gordon Mackay preached vigorous, unusual sermon. Fear I was less occupied with sermon, however, than with the preacher. Effect of him somewhat like having airplane fly low over one's head—thrilling but making one momentarily want to dodge and duck. Power, purpose, persistence—these make a stout humming from his wings. When the plane takes a slant upward and away, one breathes freer. If he should invite one to be his passenger, Lord only knows whether one would be more fascinated or fearful.

Departing congregation much interested in Mrs. Schuyler Chase in society of ex-teacher. Heard suppressed whisperings; caught glances, mostly friendly, a few averted; Gildersleeves unconscious of J. J.'s presence; Broughtons pursuing middle course of half-mod. Thoroughly enjoyed it all.

Home again, uniform on, knives and forks laid. Reverberations of airplane dying away in distance, overcome by hummings of mosquitoes close at hand. Mrs. Lawson quite insufferable.... What does it matter?

VI.

"Good morning, Josephine. Mrs. Chase in?"

"She's out riding with Master Bob, Doctor Fiske. She'll be back soon, I think.... She's coming now."

Richard Fiske turned upon the old stone doorstep to see two figures on horseback cantering up the driveway—a driveway no longer overgrown with weeds but trimly neat. At even a short distance it looked as if two boys were arriving, one sturdily slender, the other small and lithe. Sally Chase and her eight-year-old son were a jolly-looking pair as they came along, both faces flushed through the summer tan which was beginning to show as a result of three full weeks of daily rides over the hills.

Seeing the familiar tall form waiting at an unusual hour of the day, Sally reined up instead of going on to the old barn. Doctor Fiske came to meet her, laying hand upon her horse's nose, which sniffed at him expectantly.

"The top of the morning to you, Rich!" Sally hailed him gayly. Then quickly: "What's the matter?"

"Do you read me so easily as that? Nothing alarming, I hope—yet urgent."

She slipped off her horse, slapping the shining brown flanks lightly as she called: "Jimmy! Look after Prince, will you?" Then she said: "Tell me quickly, Rich. Is it anything about Schuyler?"

"Yes. He's had a touch of fever in London, and it's been complicated by the necessity for an operation. Caldwell cabled me you'd better come, just as an ordinary precaution." Howard Caldwell was one of the clergymen who accompanied Schuyler Chase on his trip abroad.

"Let me see the cable." Sally's voice was steady, but her hand shook a little as she took the yellow paper. Doctor Fiske had known it would be useless to deny her. "Just as an ordinary precaution" does not often go over the trans-Atlantic cables.

The message read: Dr. Richard Fiske, New York: Chase fever operation send wife immediately.

Caldwell. "Now you know all that I do," the doctor said gently, as Sally studied the meager words with a studied frown. "But realizing Schuyler's run-down, over-strung condition when he left, I think it's safe to deduce that Caldwell and Bronson merely want the moral effect of your presence, and that the case isn't necessarily in dan-

ger. It may easily be that Schuyler himself—"

"He hasn't sent for me," said Sally firmly, and lifted her head in the proud gesture her friend and physician knew so well. She would never admit what he was practically sure of, that Schuyler in any crisis would demand her presence, at no matter what cost. "Of course I'll go—by the first boat." She pulled off her riding gloves as if that were the first in a sequence of hasty preparations.

"I knew you would. So I've got passage for you on the Aquitania for Southampton. It sails this afternoon at three."

"But how in the world did you—"

"Happen to know several officials, and when I put the case up to them they cut a lot of red tape. A last-minute cancellation was a great piece of luck, too, for it gives you pretty fair quarters, though not what I'd have liked for you."

"Did that cable come just this morning?"

"Yesterday noon," said Richard Fiske, looking her straight in the eyes. "I held it till I could arrange this passage—had to have that much time. No need to tell you till you could start. You see, I know you! And when I got the passage, I cabled back."

Her gratitude to him was in her face and in her low-spoken words, "Bless you, Rich—indeed you do. I should have been tortured until I knew I could go. Now, I've only to plan how to leave the children."

She put her hand to her head for an instant, thrusting it through the shining masses of her fair hair. Her worried glance turned to young Bob, striding at the driveway; then shifted to a distant group at the foot of the garden, where Barbra played in a sand pile while the nursemaid Mary sat crotcheting beside little Schuyler, tumbling about upon a blanket on the grass.

"That's easy. Leave them with Josephine. I'd give her a certificate of fitness at sight. She's no housemaid, she's a real person, and I've no possible idea how you came to get her in a uniform."

Sally was leading the way into the house. In the square parlor she stood turning the possibilities over in her mind. "I ought to have some older woman—perhaps a trained nurse. Couldn't you get me one?"

"Nonsense. The youngsters are all healthy and hearty as advertisements for a breakfast food. Josephine knows them and they like her—I've watched them running after her. She's perfectly competent, or I don't know brains and sense when I see them. And I promise you I'll run out at least twice a week, and be on call at any time. Leave the children to Josephine and me, Sally, and don't have a care."

"She is competent, I'm sure," Sally agreed. "But that would be to put her in charge of the whole house. She couldn't do it any other way. I don't know how Mrs. Lawson and Mary—"

"Let 'em blow up if they're jealous. I'll bet Josephine can handle 'em." Doctor Fiske looked as if for the moment he had forgotten the possible tragedy taking place on the other side of the Atlantic for the more than probable comedy about to be enacted on this one. "And I'll back her in any domestic energy. I can put the fear of man into any servant alive. Trust us, Sally dear—and go pack your bag. You must have lunch and then be

off. I'll go order it for you." "No, thank you. I must tell them all myself. Josephine first—if you're really perfectly sure—"

"Dead sure. I'd pick that girl out of a thousand volunteers to help me run an emergency hospital after an earthquake, without a particle of training. Why, Sally, where are your eyes?"

"Oh, I've observed her. I do think she will do—and much better than any friend I could summon or who would come that I can think of."

Sally disappeared, and Dr. Richard Fiske stood looking at the door which had closed behind her, thinking thoughts in which he had, more or less unwisely, indulged himself many times before. She was so strong, and so sweet, so ready to sacrifice herself, she deserved somebody to stand by her on her own ground, not a step below her, pulling on her. He knew he was unfair to Schuyler, and yet—well—he felt he wasn't altogether unfair. It would take a good deal to convince him of that.

In the kitchen Mrs. Chase was stating her case.

"I shall have to put Josephine in charge of everything here, Mrs. Lawson, because my friends are all out of town, my family live too far away, and I don't know of anybody to call on. Doctor Fiske thinks her perfectly competent. Of course you will manage the kitchen as usual—I can depend on you for that! But since somebody must be responsible for everything in the house, and especially for the children, I'm appointing Miss Jenney. I'm going to ask you and Mary to call her that. I understand," she added quickly, "that you will find that a little difficult at first, but it's the only way I can arrange in such a hurry."

Mrs. Lawson said something unintelligible, turning her back as she bent over the oven, and Sally realized forbodingly that trouble would be brewing from the moment that the door closed behind her. But there was no time to apply more oil upon the waters than could be done in this hasty interview. Mrs. Lawson had not been long in her employ, and could not be relied upon as an old and loyal family servant. Well, Richard Fiske was right, there was nothing to do but to trust Josephine Jenney.

"Remember, please, Mrs. Lawson," Sally said, with the pleasant dignity which was peculiarly hers in dealing with domestic affairs, "that I am very anxious about my husband, and that I want to go away without any worries as to the way things will be done in my absence. Whatever difficulties come up, please make the best of them till I am back; then we will settle everything properly. May I rely on you?"

The woman turned at this appeal, an answered humanly enough that she was sorry about Doctor Chase, and would try to get along without Mrs. Chase. "But I'm free to say I think you're making a mistake to put a waitress in charge of things she knows nothing about," she relieved her injured feelings by saying.

"Miss Jenney is a school teacher," Sally decided promptly to reveal the whole situation. "She only took this position as vacation work. Perhaps knowing that will make a difference, Mrs. Lawson. You will see that she can easily learn how to take charge of a home.... That's all, I think. I'll say goodbye to you all when I've packed and had the coffee you're to make for me."

She ran upstairs, to find that Jo had brought out her traveling clothes, her bags, and had laid everything else in readiness of which she could think. In Sally's eyes she already looked like a friend.

"Oh, Josephine—thank you! And please stay while I dress, for I'll have no other time to talk things over. Do you know I'm leaving everything in charge of you? I suppose Doc-

tor Fiske told you, or you wouldn't have thought to do all this for me."

"Yes, Mrs. Chase, Doctor Fiske told me just why you were going, and that there was nobody except me to trust with the children and the house. Please let me promise you that I'll take every care of them. I do know children pretty thoroughly, and I know your wishes about their food and sleep and the rest of it. You're not to be anxious about us."

Sally looked into Josephine Jenney's steady, beautiful eyes under their level dark brows, noted afresh the cool, charming poise of her manner, and recognized the sure signs of one who could safely be placed in authority because she was wholly fit to use it. Sally drew a deep breath of relief, and her confidence was made fast.

"Thank you—that does help so much," she said. "And now, I've told Mrs. Lawson you're to be called Miss Jenney, and you must enforce that. If you are actually mistress in my absence you must be mistress in name, too."

"Yes, I suppose so. It will undoubtedly be—the cause of interesting developments in the kitchen," Jo answered, so precisely as one of Sally's friends might have said it that even in this hour of anxiety both young women smiled amusedly, as visions of domestic furies over questions of precedence came into their minds. Then Sally sobered again as she laid practical details before her assistant, which ended with: "Please take off the uniform before I go, Josephine, so the others may see I wanted you to do it. I'm going to call you Josephine, still, you see, but as a friend now—and my strong right arm."

So when, an hour later, Sally Chase, in traveling clothes, her luggage already in Doctor Fiske's car, stood up from the long embraces she had given Bob and Barbara—a kiss on the cheek of the sleeping baby being all she had ventured—as she was able to put the beloved three into the hands of one who looked, as she had looked on that Sunday a week ago, so like "one of the family," that Sally's heart was suddenly more at ease about them than she could have believed possible.

As she took her place in the car, and Doctor Fiske ran around to its other side, in a hurry to get her off and end the emotional strain, an unexpected arrival halted him. There was the sound of a quick step on the driveway, and the next instant a ruggedly attractive face looked in upon Sally; thick, sandy hair with a touch of curl in it gleamed in the sun; and a quiet voice with a strong Scottish accent said rapidly:

"I'll not delay you a minute, Mrs. Chase. I just got word you were off to meet your husband. I'm Gordon Mackay, and I'm used to trying to be of service. I want to keep an eye on your household, if you're willing. I'd like to come over and play with the bairns, and if I'm needed in any way Miss Jenney can call on me. Will you let me take care of any difficulties that may come up, for you?"

How in the world did the man know it all, even to Jo Jenny's new position? Let those who live in small towns tell. But Sally didn't bother to wonder about that, in this hurried moment. All she knew or cared for was that this was the Scottish preacher she had so liked, and that still another "strong right arm" was at her disposal. The man looked as if he could indeed move mountains of "difficulties" at need.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

A Touching Tale.

From Le Petit Bleu.

"Of course you remember? We went to college together. Well, here's what brought me to see you—I have a magnificent proposition and it will take \$25,000 to swing it."

"Let's come to the point. Do you want a dollar?"

"I—I didn't dare ask you for it."

passing upon issues of securities. And there was the law which forbade railroads to own coal mines and oil wells and other businesses. But there is still the large loophole, Mr. Lewis indicates. Whether his particular charges are well founded or not, there is nothing to prevent those who own the railroads from owning other companies. And this may give one road an interest in paying excessive prices for equipment, and supplies; another, an interest in depressing prices. The latter would be difficult to condemn as a business policy, but Mr. Lewis' charge is that it is done to reduce miners to servitude



The Cream of the Tobacco Crop



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Modern Suite

Evidently it has remained for California to give the world a new style in architecture. At the recent convention in Detroit, the Georgian, Elizabethan, Roman, Queen Anne, etc., had been discussed as to their relative merits for various parts of the country.

"All very fine," finally interrupted the Californian, "but out our way, we're introducing an entirely new style, to suit our own self-evident needs—a garage for three cars, with a built-in living-room."

It's a Question

Apartment Hunter—How much is this apartment with the piano? Manager—Let's see—would you mind playing it first, please?

There are myriads of babies as fine as any theory of eugenics could have produced.

Of Course!

"They say he has a fortune with seven ciphers in it." "That's nothing!"



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Mines and Railroads.

From the Milwaukee Journal. John L. Lewis, chief of the United Mine Workers, makes a picture of the coal industry in which there is no comfort. "As affecting the miners, conditions are bad; as affecting the operators, they hardly could be worse. It is doubtful whether the bituminous coal industry pays 1 per cent after its fixed charges are paid." Here, then, in this industry governing the lives of millions of Americans, we have been failures while we have heard nothing but boasts of our prosperity and humanity. Mr. Lewis says the railroads are

to blame for much. For, he charges, they combine with coal operators to break the unions. The Milwaukee road, he charges, would rather pay \$6 a ton for coal than buy it at \$3 from mines which have the union scale. The seeming remedy for this would be to require railroads, which base their demand for rates upon their costs, to buy supplies at the lowest obtainable price. But this would not meet Mr. Lewis' objection. For in the next breath he is declaring that the Pennsylvania is reducing whole communities to poverty because it will not buy except at prices forbidding profitable operation. The

coal purchase of the railroads are so enormous that their practices are almost a controlling factor.

So we get a new and disturbing light upon the difficulty of making the railroads the servant and not the master of the public. Through the Interstate commerce commission, we have tried to end the evils of favoritism by forbidding rebates and requiring the equitable distribution of freight cars. We have tried to limit gouging by fixing rates. Theoretically there is even control of financial hocus-pocus and looting through the Interstate commerce commission's function of