



CHAPTER IX—Continued

I went to Newport in July. "The cottage," as I suspected, was twice as large and twice as pretentious as the New York residence; and it sported twice the number of servants. Once again I was caught in the whirl of dinners and dances and motoring, with the addition of tennis and bathing. And always, at my side, was Jerry, seemingly living only upon my lightest whim and fancy. He wished to paint my portrait; but there was no time, especially as my visit, in accordance with Mother's inexorable decision, was of only one week's duration.

But what a wonderful week that was! I seemed to be under a kind of spell. It was as if I were in a new world—a world such as no one had ever been in before. Oh, I knew, of course, that others had loved—but not as we loved. I was sure that no one had ever loved as we loved. And it was so much more wonderful than anything I had ever dreamed of—this love of ours. Yet all my life since my early teens I had been thinking and planning and waiting for it—love. And now it had come—the real thing. The others—all the others had been shams and make-believes and counterfeits.

At Newport Jerry decided that he wanted to be married right away. He



At Newport Jerry Decided That He Wanted to Be Married Right Away.

didn't want to wait two more endless years until I was graduated. The idea of wasting all that valuable time when we might be together! And when there was really no reason for it, either—no reason at all!

I smiled to myself, even as I thrilled at his sweet insistence. I was pretty sure I knew two reasons—two very good reasons—why I could not marry before graduation. One reason was Father; the other reason was Mother. I hinted as much.

"Ho! Is that all?" He laughed and kissed me. "I'll run down and see them about it," he said jauntily.

I smiled again. I had no more idea that anything he could say would—

But I didn't know Jerry—then.

I had not been home from Newport a week when Jerry kept his promise and "ran down." And he had not been there two days before Father and Mother admitted that, perhaps, after all, it would not be so bad an idea if I shouldn't graduate, but should be married instead.

And so I was married.

(Didn't I tell you that Jerry always brought rings and put them on?)

And again I say, and so we were married.

But what did we know of each other—the real other? True, we had danced together, been swimming together, dined together, played tennis together. But what did we really know of each other's whims and prejudices, opinions and personal habits and tastes? I knew, to a word, what Jerry would say about a sunset; and he knew, I fancy, what I would say about a dreamy waltz song. But we didn't either of us know what the other would say to a dinnerless home with the cook gone. We were leaving a good deal to be learned later on; but we didn't think of that. Love that is to last must be built upon the realization that troubles and trials and sorrows are sure to come, and that they must be borne together—if one back is not to break under the load. We were entering into a contract, not for a week, but, presumably, for a lifetime—and a good deal may come to our

age." "Why, Mother, I—I—" And then I stopped again. And I was so angry and indignant with myself because I had to stop, when there were so many, many things that I wanted to say, if only my dry lips could articulate the words.

Mother drew her breath in with a little catch. She had grown rather white.

"I wonder if you remember—if you ever think of—your childhood," she said.

"Why, yes, of—of course—sometimes." It was my turn to stammer. I was thinking of that diary that I had just read—and added to.

Mother drew in her breath again, this time with a catch that was almost a sob. And then she began to talk—at first haltingly, with half-finished sentences; then hurriedly, with a rush of words that seemed not able to utter themselves fast enough to keep up with the thoughts behind them.

She told of her youth and marriage, and of my coming. She told of her life with Father, and of the mistakes she made. She told much, of course, that was in Mary Marie's diary; but she told, oh, so much more, until like a panorama the whole thing lay before me.

Then she spoke of me, of my childhood, and her voice began to quiver. You can see things so much more clearly when you stand off at a distance like this, you know, than you can when you are close to them!

She broke down and cried when she spoke of the divorce, and of the influence it had upon me, and of the false idea of marriage it gave me. She said it was the worst kind of thing for me—the sort of life I had to live. She said I grew pert and precocious and worldly-wise, and full of servants' talk and ideas. She even spoke of that night at the little cafe table when I glowed in the sparkle and spangles and told her that now we were seeing life—real life. And of how shocked she was, and of how she saw then what this thing was doing to me. But it was too late.

She told more, much more, about the later years, and the reconciliation; then, some way, she brought things around to Jerry and me. Her face flushed up then, and she didn't meet my eyes. She looked down at her sewing. She was very busy turning a hem just so.

She said there had been a time, once, when she had worried a little about Jerry and me, for fear we would separate. She said that she believed that, for her, that would have been the very blackest moment of her life; for it would be her fault, all her fault.

I tried to break in here, and say, "No, no," and that it wasn't her fault; but she shook her head and wouldn't listen, and she lifted her hand, and I had to keep still and let her go on talking. She was looking straight into my eyes then, and there was such a deep, deep hurt in them that I just had to listen.

She said again that it would be her fault; that if I had done that she would have known that it was all because, of the example she herself had set me of childish willfulness and selfish seeking of personal happiness at the expense of everything and everybody else. And she said that that would have been the last straw to break her heart.

But she declared that she was sure now that she need not worry. Such a thing would never be.

I guess I gasped a little at this. Anyhow, I know I tried to break in and tell her that we were going to separate, and that that was exactly what I had come into the room in the first place to say.

But again she kept right on talking, and I was silenced before I had even begun.

She said how she knew it could never be—on account of Eunice. That I would never subject my little girl to the sort of wretchedly divided life that I had to live when I was a child.

(As she spoke I was suddenly back in the cobwebby attic with little Mary's diary, and I thought—what if it were Eunice—writing that?)

She said I was the most devoted mother she had ever known; that I was too devoted, she feared sometimes, for I made Eunice all my world, to the exclusion of Jerry and everything and

everybody else. But that she was very sure, because I was so devoted, and loved Eunice so dearly, that I would never deprive her of a father's love and care.

I shivered a little, and looked quickly into Mother's face. But she was not looking at me. I was thinking of how Jerry had kissed and kissed Eunice a month ago, when we came away, as if he just couldn't let her go. Jerry is fond of Eunice, now that she's old enough to know something, and Eunice adores her father. I knew that part was going to be hard. And now to have Mother put it like that—

I began to talk then of Jerry. I just felt that I'd got to say something. That Mother must listen. That she didn't understand. I told her how Jerry loved lights and music and dancing, and crowds bowing down and worshipping him all the time. And she said yes, she remembered; that he'd been that way when I married him.

She spoke so sort of queerly that again I glanced at her; but she still was looking down at the hem she was turning.

I went on then to explain that I didn't like such things; that I believed that there were deeper and higher things, and things more worth while. And she said yes, she was glad, and that that was going to be my saving grace; for, of course, I realized that there couldn't be anything deeper or higher or more worth while than keeping the home together, and putting up with annoyances, for the ultimate good of all, especially of Eunice.

She went right on then quickly, before I could say anything. She said that, of course, I understood that I was still Mary and Marie, even if Jerry did call me Mollie; and if Marie had married a man that wasn't always congenial with Mary, she was very sure Mary had enough stamina and good sense to make the best of it; and she was very sure, also, that if Mary would only make a little effort to be once in a while the Marie he had married, things might be a lot easier—for Mary.

Of course, I laughed at that. I had to. And Mother laughed, too. But we understood. We both understood. I had never thought of it before, but I had been Marie when I married Jerry. I loved lights and music and dancing and gay crowds just exactly as well as he did. And it wasn't his fault that I suddenly turned into Mary when the baby came, and wanted him to stay at home before the fire every evening with his dressing-gown and slippers. No wonder he was surprised. He hadn't married Mary—he never knew Mary at all. But, do you know? I'd never thought of that before—until Mother said what she did. Why, probably Jerry was just as much disappointed to find his Marie turned into a Mary as I—

But Mother was talking again.

She said that she thought Jerry was a wonderful man, in some ways; that she never saw a man with such charm and magnetism, or one who could so readily adapt himself to different persons and circumstances. And she said she was very sure if Mary could only show a little more interest in pictures (especially portraits), and learn to discuss lights and shadows and perspectives, that nothing would be lost, and that something might be gained; that there was nothing, anyway, like a community of interest or of hobbies to bring two people together; and that it was safer, to say the least, when it was the wife that shared the community of interest than when it was some other woman, though of course, she knew as well as I knew that Jerry never would— She didn't finish her sentence, and because she didn't finish it, it made me think all the more.

Then, in a minute, she was talking again.

She was speaking of Eunice. She said once more that because of her, she knew that she need never fear any serious trouble between Jerry and me, for, after all, it's the child that always pays for the mother's mistakes and short-sightedness, just as it is the soldier that pays for his commanding officer's blunders. That's why she felt that I had had to pay for her mistakes, and why she knew that I'd never compel my little girl to pay for mine. She said that the mother lives in the heart of the child long after the mother is gone, and that was why the mother always had to be so careful.

Then, before I knew it, she was talking briskly and brightly about something entirely different; and two minutes later I found myself alone outside of her room. And I hadn't told her.

But I wasn't even thinking of that. I was thinking of Eunice, and of that round, childish, scrawly of a diary upstairs in the attic trunk. And I was picturing Eunice, in the years to come, writing her diary; and I thought, what if she should have to—

I went upstairs then and read that diary again. And all the while I was reading I thought of Eunice. And when it was finished I knew that I'd never tell Mother, and that I'd never write to Jerry—not the letter that I was going to write. I knew that.

They brought Jerry's letter to me at just that point. What a wonderful letter that man can write—when he wants to!

He says he's lonesome and homesick, and that the house is like a tomb without Eunice and me, and when am I coming home?

I wrote him tonight that I was going—tomorrow.

THE END.



Then She Spoke of Me, and of My Childhood, and Her Voice Began to Quiver.

Extension Road No. 420

To whom it may concern:—

The special Commissioner appointed to locate a public road as follows: Commencing at the corner to Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8 town 12 N. R. 30 W. running thence north one mile to the NE corner of Sec. 6 said township and range. Also commencing at the SE corner of section 32 T. 13 N. R. 30 W. running thence on line between sec. 32 and 33 one mile, thence Northwest and Northeast through the East 1/2 of Secs. 23 and 20 to connect with Road No. 8 about 9 chains west of the NE corner of said section 20, following said section between Secs. 20 and 21 T. 13 N. R. 30 W. for about one half mile has reported in favor thereof anyone having objections hereto or claims for damages by reason of the establishment of the above road must file same in the office of the County Clerk of Lincoln County, Nebraska or said road will be allowed without reference thereto, on or before 12 o'clock noon of the 16th day of September, 1922.

Witness my hand and official seal this 8th day of July, 1922.

A. S. Allen
County Clerk

Extension Road No. 265

To whom it may concern:—

The special commissioner appointed to locate a road as follows: Commencing at Road No. 265 at the northeast corner of Section twenty nine (29), township nine (9) range twenty seven (27) west thence north about 520 rods on or near the section line as practical, thence in a northerly direction passing around the head of a canyon and back to the section line, thence north to the northeast corner of section Seventeen (17), thence in a northwesterly direction down a ridge about 160 rods, to the main canyon, thence in a north easterly direction along the east bank of the canyon on section eight (8) to the north line of section eight, thence in a northerly direction along the east bank of the canyon on section five (5) to a point about 20 rods south of the Northeast corner of section five (5), thence crossing canyon and going north 20 rods along the north side of canyon to the Northeast corner of Section five (5), thence north about 240 rods on the west section line of Section thirty three (33), township ten (10), range twenty seven (27) west thence in a northeasterly direction around a head of a canyon to a point about 15 rods east of the northwest corner of section thirty three (33), thence east about 140 rods along or as near practical the section line between section thirty three (33) and twenty eight (28) to the northeast corner of the northwest quarter of section thirty three (33) township ten (ten) north range twenty seven (27) west of the sixth principal meridian, the above road terminating at Extension of road No. 20 and to be any width up to 66 feet wide to make a good road has been reported in favor thereof, anyone having objections thereto or claims for damages by reason of the establishing of the above described road must file same in Office of the County Clerk of Lincoln County, Nebraska on or before 12 o'clock noon of the 16 day of September 1922 or said road will be allowed without reference thereto.

Witness by hand and official seal this 8th day of July, 1922.

A. S. Allen
County Clerk

DR. L. A. SNAVELY
Dentist
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and Obstetrics
Office: Building & Loan Building
Phones: Office 130 Residence 115

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Estate No. 1893 of Rhoda A. Edmiston, deceased in the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska.

The State of Nebraska, ss. Creditors of said estate will take notice that the time limited for presentation and filing of claims against said Estate is Nov. 11, 1922 and for settlement of said Estate is June 30, 1923; that I will sit at the county court room in said County August 11th, 1922, at 10 o'clock a. m. and on November 11th, 1922 at 10 o'clock a. m., to receive, examine, hear, allow, or adjust all claims and objections duly filed.

Dated June 30, 1922.

Wm. H. C. Woodhurst
County Judge

ROAD NO. 422.

To whom it may concern:—

The special Commissioner appointed to locate a public road as follows: Commencing at the corner to Section 4, 5, 8 and 9 township 12 north range 30 west of the 6th p. m., running thence west on section line between sections 5 and 8, and 6 and 7 two miles to connect with extension to Road No. 42 has reported in favor thereof anyone having objections thereto or claims for damages by reason of the establishment of described road must file same in the office of the County Clerk of Lincoln County, Nebraska on or before 12 o'clock noon of the 16th day of September, 1922.

Witness my hand and official seal this 8th day of July, 1922.

A. S. Allen
County Clerk

ROAD NO. 420

To whom it may concern:—

The special Commissioner appointed to locate a public road as follows: Commencing at the corner to Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8 town 12 N. R. 30 W. running thence north one mile to the NE corner of Sec. 6 said township and range. Also commencing at the SE corner of section 32 T. 13 N. R. 30 W. running thence on line between sec. 32 and 33 one mile, thence Northwest and Northeast through the East 1/2 of Secs. 23 and 20 to connect with Road No. 8 about 9 chains west of the NE corner of said section 20, following said section between Secs. 20 and 21 T. 13 N. R. 30 W. for about one half mile has reported in favor thereof anyone having objections hereto or claims for damages by reason of the establishment of the above road must file same in the office of the County Clerk of Lincoln County, Nebraska or said road will be allowed without reference thereto, on or before 12 o'clock noon of the 16th day of September, 1922.

Witness my hand and official seal this 8th day of July, 1922.

A. S. Allen
County Clerk

Extension Road No. 265

To whom it may concern:—

The special commissioner appointed to locate a road as follows: Commencing at Road No. 265 at the northeast corner of Section twenty nine (29), township nine (9) range twenty seven (27) west thence north about 520 rods on or near the section line as practical, thence in a northerly direction passing around the head of a canyon and back to the section line, thence north to the northeast corner of section Seventeen (17), thence in a northwesterly direction down a ridge about 160 rods, to the main canyon, thence in a north easterly direction along the east bank of the canyon on section eight (8) to the north line of section eight, thence in a northerly direction along the east bank of the canyon on section five (5) to a point about 20 rods south of the Northeast corner of section five (5), thence crossing canyon and going north 20 rods along the north side of canyon to the Northeast corner of Section five (5), thence north about 240 rods on the west section line of Section thirty three (33), township ten (10), range twenty seven (27) west thence in a northeasterly direction around a head of a canyon to a point about 15 rods east of the northwest corner of section thirty three (33), thence east about 140 rods along or as near practical the section line between section thirty three (33) and twenty eight (28) to the northeast corner of the northwest quarter of section thirty three (33) township ten (ten) north range twenty seven (27) west of the sixth principal meridian, the above road terminating at Extension of road No. 20 and to be any width up to 66 feet wide to make a good road has been reported in favor thereof, anyone having objections thereto or claims for damages by reason of the establishing of the above described road must file same in Office of the County Clerk of Lincoln County, Nebraska on or before 12 o'clock noon of the 16 day of September 1922 or said road will be allowed without reference thereto.

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