

THE ROSE-GARDEN HUSBAND

By MARGARET WIDDEMER

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"I am—sure you will," panted Mrs. Harrington. "You look like a good girl, and—old enough to be responsible—28—30?"

"And you are sure you will know when the attendants are neglectful? I speak to them all the time, but I never can be sure. . . . And now you'd better see poor Allan. This is one of his good days. Just think, dear Isabel, he spoke to me twice without my speaking to him this morning!"

"Oh—must I?" asked Phyllis, dismayed. "Couldn't I wait till—till it happens?"

Mrs. Harrington actually laughed a little at her shyness, lighting up like a girl. Phyllis felt dimly, though she tried not to, that through it all her mother-in-law-elect was taking pleasure in the dramatic side of the situation she had engineered.

"Oh, my dear, you must see him. He expects you," she answered almost gaily. The procession of three moved down the long room towards a door, Phyllis's hand guiding the wheel chair. She was surprised to find herself shaking with fright. Just what she expected to find beyond the door she did not know, but it must have been some horror, for it was with a heart bound of wild relief that she finally made out Allan Harrington, sitting white in the darkened place.

A Crusader on a tomb. Yes, he looked like that. In the room's half dusk the pallor of his still, clear featured face and his long clear cut hands was nearly the same as the whiteness of the couch draperies. His hair, yellow brown and waving, flung back from his forehead like a crest, and his dark brows and lashes made the only note of darkness about him. To Phyllis's beauty loving eyes he seemed so perfect an image that she could have watched him for hours.

"Here's Miss Braithwaite, my poor darling," said his mother. "The young lady we have been talking about so long."

The Crusader lifted his eyelids and let them fall again.

"Is she?" he said listlessly.

"Don't you want to talk to her, darling boy?" his mother persisted, half out of breath, but still full of that unrefusable loving energy and insistence which she would probably keep to the last minute of her life.

"No," said the Crusader, still in those empty listless tones. "I'd rather not talk. I'm tired."

His mother seemed not all put out.

"Of course, darling," she said, kissing him. She sat by him still, however, and poured out sentence after sentence of question, insistence, imploration, and pity, eliciting no answer at all. Phyllis wondered how it would feel to have to lie still and have that done to you for a term of years. The result of her wonderment was a decision to forgive her unenthusiastic bridegroom for what she had at first been ready to slap him.

Presently Mrs. Harrington's breath flagged, and the three women went away, back to the room they had been in before. Phyllis sat and let herself be talked to for a little longer. Then she rose impulsively.

"May I go back and see your son again just for a minute?" she asked, and had gone before Mrs. Harrington had finished her permission. She darted into the dark room before her courage had time to fail, and stood by the white couch again.

"Mr. Harrington," she said clearly, "I'm sorry you're tired, but I'm afraid I am going to have to ask you to listen to me. You know, don't you that your mother plans to have me marry you for a sort of interested head nurse? Are you willing to have it happen? Because I won't do it unless you really prefer it."

The heavy white lids half lifted again.

"I don't mind," said Allan Harrington listlessly. "I suppose you are quiet and trustworthy or De Guenther wouldn't have sent you. It will give mother a little peace and it makes no difference to me."

He closed his eyes and the subject at the same time.

"Well, then, that's all right," said Phyllis cheerfully, and started to go. Then, drawn back by a sudden, nervous temper impulse, she moved back on him. "And let me tell you," she added, half laughing, half impudently, "that if you ever get into my quiet trustworthy clutches you may have an awful time. You're a very spoiled invalid."

She whisked out of the room before he could have gone very far with his reply. But he had not cared to reply, apparently. He lay unmoved and unmoving.

Phyllis discovered, pissing-breath-

less on the threshold that somehow she had seen his eyes. They had been a little like the wolfhound's, a sort of wistful gold brown.

For some reason she found that Allan Harrington's attitude of absolute detachment made the whole affair seem much easier for her. And when Mrs. Harrington slipped a solitaire diamond into her hand as she went, instead of disliking it she enjoyed its feel on her fingers, and the flash of it in the light. She thanked Mrs. Harrington for it with real gratitude. But it made her feel more than ever engaged to marry her mother-in-law.

She walked home rather silently with Mrs. De Guenther. Only at the foot of the De Guenther steps, she made one absent remark.

"He must have been delightful," she said, "when he was alive!"

VI.

After a week of the old bustling, dusty hard work, the Liberty Teacher's visit to the De Guenther's and the subsequent one at the Harringtons', and even her sparkling white ring, seemed part of a queer story she had finished and put back on the shelf. The ring was the most real thing, because it was something of a worry. She didn't dare to leave it at home, nor did she want to wear it. She finally sewed it up in a chamois bag that she safely pinned under her shirt waist. Then she dismissed it from her mind also. There is very little time in Liberty Teacher's life for meditation. Only once in a while would some to her the vision of the wistful Harrington wolfhound following his inadequate patch of sunlight, or of the dusky room where Allan Harrington lay inert and white, and looking like a wonderful carved statue on a tomb.

She began to do a little to her clothes, but not very much, because she had neither time nor money. Mr. De Guenther had wanted her to take some money in advance, but she had refused. She did not want it till she had earned it, and, anyway, it would have made the whole thing so real, she knew, that she would have backed out.

"And it isn't as if I were going to a lover," she defended herself to Mrs. De Guenther with a little wistful smile. "Nobody will know what I have on, any more than they do now."

Mrs. De Guenther gave a scandalized little cry. Her attitude was determined that it was just an ordinary marriage, as good an excuse for sentiment and pretty frocks as any other.

"My dear child," she replied firmly, "you are going to have one pretty frock and one really good street suit now, or I will know why! The rest you may get yourself after the wedding, but you must obey me in this. Nonsense! you can get a half day, as you call it, perfectly well! What's Albert in politics for, if he can't get favors for his friends."

And in effect, it proved that Albert was in politics to some purpose, for orders came up from the Head's office within 20 minutes after Mrs. De Guenther had used the telephone on her husband, that Miss Braithwaite was to have a half day immediately—as far as she could make out, in order to transact city affairs! She felt as if the angels had told her she could have the last fortnight over again, as a favor, or something of the sort. A half day out of turn was something nobody had ever heard of. She was even too surprised to object to the frock part of the situation. She tried to stand out a little longer, but it's a very stolid young woman who can refuse to have pretty clothes bought for her, and the end of it was a seat in a salon she had always considered so expensive that you scarcely ought to look in the window.

"Had it better be a black suit?" asked Mrs. De Guenther doubtfully, as the tall lady in floppy chamoise hovered haughtily about them, expecting orders. "It seems horrible to buy mourning when dear Angela is not yet passed away, but it would only be showing proper respect; and I remember my own dear mother planned all our mourning outfits while she was dying. It was quite a pleasure to her."

Phyllis kept her face straight, and slipped one persuasive hand through her friend's arm.

"I don't believe I could buy mourning, dear," she said. "And—oh, if you knew how long I'd wanted a really blue blue suit! Only, it would have been too vivid to wear well—I always knew that—because you can only afford one every other year. And—Phyllis rather diffidently voiced a thought which had been in

the back of her mind for a long time—"If I'm going to be much around Mr. Harrington, don't you think cheerful clothes would be best? Everything in that house seems somber enough now."

"Perhaps you are right, dear child," said Mrs. De Guenther. "I hope you may be the means of putting a great deal of brightness into poor Allan's life before he joins his mother."

"Oh, don't!" cried Phyllis impulsively. Somehow she could not bear to think of Allan Harrington's dying. He was too beautiful to be dead, where nobody could see him any more. Besides, Phyllis privately considered that a long vacation before he joined his mother would be only the fair thing for "poor Allan." Youth sides with youth. And—the clear cut white lines of him rose in her memory and stayed there. She could almost hear that poor, tired, toneless voice of his, that was yet so deep and so perfectly accented.

She bought docilely whatever her guide directed, and woke from a species of gentle daze at the afternoon's end to find Mrs. De Guenther beaming with the weary rapture of the successful shopper, and herself the proprietress of a turquoise velvet walking suit, a hat to match, a pale blue evening frock, a pale green between dress with lovely clinging lines, and a heavenly white crepe thin with rosy ribbons and filmy shadow lace—the negligee of one's dreams. There were also slippers and shoes and stockings and—this was really too bad of Mrs. De Guenther—a half dozen set of lingerie, straight through. Mrs. De Guenther sat and continued to beam joyously over the array in Phyllis's little bedroom.

"It's my present dearie," she said calmly. "So you needn't worry about using Angela's money. Gracious, it's been lovely! I haven't had such a good time since my husband's little grand niece came on for a week. There's nothing like dressing a girl, after all."

And Phyllis could only kiss her. But when her guest had gone she laid all the boxes of finery under her bed, the only place where there was any room. She would not take any of it out, she determined, till her summons came. But on second thought, she wore the blue velvet street suit on Sunday visits to Mrs. Harrington, which became—she never knew just when or how—a regular thing. The vivid blue made her eyes nearly sky color and brightened her hair very satisfactorily. She was taking more time and trouble over her looks now—one has to live up to a turquoise velvet hat and—eat! She found herself, too, becoming very genuinely fond of the restless, anxiously loving, passionate, unwise child who dwelt in Mrs. Harrington's frail elderly body and had almost worn it out. She sat long hours of every Sunday afternoon, holding Mrs. Harrington's thin little hot hands, and listening to her swift, italicized monologues about Allan—what she must do, what he must not do, how he must be looked after, how his mother had treated him, how his wishes must be ascertained and followed.

"Though all he wants now is dark and quiet," said his mother pitiously. "I don't even go in there now to cry."

She spoke as if it were an established ritual. Had she been using her son's sickroom, Phyllis wondered, as a regular weeping place?

She could feel in Mrs. Harrington, even in this mortal sickness, the tremendous driving influence which is often part of a passionately active and not very wise personality. That certitude and insistence of Mrs. Harrington's could hammer you finally into believing or doing almost anything. Phyllis wondered how much his mother's heartbroken adoration and pity might have had to do with making her son as hopeless minded as he was.

Naturally, the mother-in-law-elect she had acquired in such a strange way became very fond of Phyllis. But indeed there was something very gay and sweet and honest minded about the girl, a something, which gave people the feeling that they were very wise in liking her. Some people you are fond of against your will. When people cared for Phyllis it was with a quite irrational feeling that they were doing a sensible thing. They never gave any of the credit to her very real, though almost invisible, charm.

She never saw Allan Harrington on any of the Sunday visits. She was sure the servants thought she did, for she knew that every one in the great dark old house knew her as the young lady who was to marry Mr. Allan. She believed that she was supposed to be an old family friend, perhaps a distant relative. She did not want to see Allan. But she did want to be as good to his little, tense, loving mother as she could, and reassure her about Allan's future care. And she succeeded.

It was on a Friday about 2 that the summons came. Phyllis had thought she expected it, but when the call

came to her over the library telephone she found herself as badly frightened as she had been the first time she went to the Harrington house. She shivered as she laid down the date she was using, and called the other librarian to take her desk. Fortunately between 1 and 4 the morning and evening shifts overlapped, and there was some one to take her place.

"Mrs. Harrington cannot last out the night," came Mr. De Guenther's clear precise voice over the telephone, without preface. "I have arranged with Mr. Johnston. You can go at once. You had better pack a suitcase, for you possibly may not be able to get back to your boarding place."

So it was to happen now! Phyllis felt, with her substitute in her place, her own wriffs on, and her feet taking her swiftly toward her goal, as if she were offering herself to be made a nun, or have a hand or foot cut off, or paying herself away in some awful, irrevocable fashion. She packed, mechanically, all the pretty things Mrs. De Guenther had given her, and nothing else. She found herself at the door of her room with the locked suitcase in her hand and not even a nail file of the things belonging to her old self in it. She shook herself together, managed to laugh a little, and returned and put in such things as she thought she would require for the night. Then she went. She always remembered that journey as long as she lived; her hands and feet and tongue going on, buying tickets, giving directions—and her mind, like a naughty child, catching at everything as they went, and screaming to be allowed to go back home, back to the dusty, matter of course library and the dreary little boarding house bedroom!

Children and Taxes.

In France, as elsewhere, the chief burden of the war has fallen upon the moderately well to do, and especially upon those who have children, but France stands out in having met the crisis with intelligent legislation. The new inheritance tax is shrewdly designed to encourage an increase of the birth rate in precisely those strata where it has been lowest, and where a lack of birth is most harmful to the nation. No net of laissez faire individualism has been more obdurate than that which is nobody's business but that of the parents how many children are born. The war taught a different lesson, but it remained for the return of peace to drive home its full significance. Necessary as mere numbers are, they are of no avail unless adequately led, and as true in the pursuit of peace as in the pursuit of war. The education for leadership has been paid for mainly, not by the state, but by the individual—who has already done it one great service in giving it a new life. It is not only that the living of the child has to be provided for the ages of 18, 25, every item for food and clothing. The rent includes a tax, indirectly levied. The state, in its blindness, has acted as profiteer upon those who aspire to do it the supreme service. Meantime in those strata where the state receives only the legal minimum of education the state provides free hospitals, free schools, welfare organizations of all kinds, and is now beginning to provide maternity grants and mothers' pensions. And these also are paid for by taxes levied largely upon the moderately well to do. It is small wonder that the birth rate among the educated is tending to become stationary, even to recede, and that the future citizens of the nation are recruited in an ever-increasing proportion from the less well to do.

Chemistry War Weapon.

From the Christian Science Monitor. Some interesting sidelights upon the claims made by Germany that she is facing possible bankruptcy unless the allies mitigate somewhat the reparations terms, were cast by a lecture on "Chemistry and the War," delivered recently in London by Professor Francis, dean of the faculty of chemistry in Bristol University. The ammonia future of Europe, for example, Professor Francis declared, lies with Germany, which is in a position to supply essential fertilizers to the whole of Europe. This he said, however, as a simple example of the fact that Germany's position as regards chemistry is immeasurably superior to that of the rest of the world. He pointed out that the ammonia supply of the world is controlled by Germany, and that the first blush of success is past.

Covered Fire.

When winter nights at deepest were, After a world of pleasant talk Before the blazing hickory log, And when the pauses longer grew, And the old clock more plainly spoke, Some one would rise—say drowsily, "Time now to cover up the fire."

And I, who never sleepy grew While tossed that ball of pleasant talk, Watched refully the red coals heaped With ashes gray and velvet-soft, Till not one watchful spark was seen. And only then my ear took note How mournfully the wind could call Down the great chimney's darkened throat.

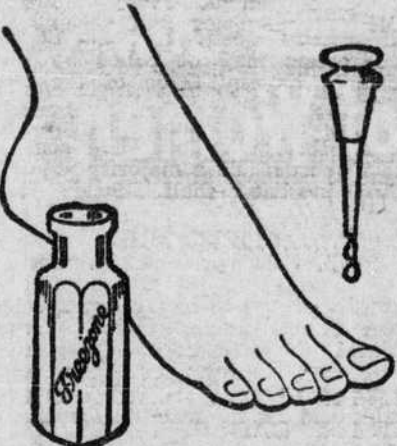
But up the stairs we climbed, to bed (I in my dreams to still climb on!) And, buried up in comfort warm, My last thought was about the fire Asleep beneath its coverlet; But safe and sure to wake up glad, And leap to meet the morning light—As I, myself, would wake up glad.

A leaf from childhood's story book. Of all who sat around that hearth In those far, friendly winter nights, Not one remains, nor heart remains. And careless memory makes store Of one of all that pleasant talk, These words that as a curfew toll, To warn how passing late the hour: "Time now to cover up the fire." —Edith M. Thomas, in the New York Times.

There was an increase of 15,401 in volume of immigration into the United States through Mexican border ports during the year 1914 over 1913.

Lift off Corns!

Doesn't hurt a bit and Freezone costs only a few cents.



With your fingers! You can lift off any hard corn, soft corn, or corn between the toes, and the hard skin caluses from bottom of feet.

A tiny bottle of "Freezone" costs little at any drug store; apply a few drops upon the corn or callous. Instantly it stops hurting, then shortly you lift that bothersome corn or calous right off, root and all, without one bit of pain or soreness. Truly! No humbug!—Adv.

Charity.

The clergyman of a poor parish was showing a rich lady round, hoping to touch her heart and so receive a big check for his people.

"We are now passing through the poorest slums," he said, as the car turned into a side street. "These people have little to brighten their lives." "I must do something for them," the lady sighed, adding to the chauffeur: "James, drive the car slowly and turn on the big lamps."—Tit-Bits.

"CARRY ON!"

If Constipated, Bilious or Headachy, take "Cascarets"

Feel grand! Be efficient! Don't stay sick, bilious, headachy, constipated. Remove the liver and bowel poison which is keeping your head dizzy, your tongue coated, your breath bad and your stomach sour. Why not get a small box of Cascarets and enjoy the nicest, gentlest laxative-cathartic you ever experienced? Cascarets never gripe, sicken or inconvenience one like Salts, Oil, Calomel or harsh pills. Cascarets bring sunshine to cloudy minds and half-sick bodies. They work while you sleep. Adv.

Didn't Fill the Bill.

One day as Harold's father was hanging up a few pictures Harold begged him to let him hang one up. His father gave him a small one and walked into another room. When he returned he found Harold sitting in a chair puffing and mopping his forehead.

"What's the matter, son? Can't you get it up?"

"Now, I guess I's too short at one end."

THAT FADED FROCK WILL DYE LIKE NEW

"Diamond Dyes" Freshen Up Old, Discarded Garments.

Don't worry about perfect results. Use "Diamond Dyes," guaranteed to give a new, rich, fadeless color to any fabric, whether it be wool, silk, linen, cotton or mixed goods—dresses, blouses, stockings, skirts, children's coats, feathers—everything!

Direction Book in package tells how to dye any material, has dealer show you "Diamond Dye" Color Card.—Adv.

Off the List.

"Don't you subscribe to Blank's magazine any more?"

"No; when I was in France I received a notice from it asking me to notify it one month in advance if I changed my address."—Home Sector.

Still Married.

Gerald—I tender you my hand. Geraldine—It isn't legal tender. You're not divorced yet.

Sure Relief



Girls! Girls!! Save Your Hair With Cuticura

Soap 25c, Ointment 25 and 50c, Talcum 25c.



ALLEN'S FOOT-EASE

Gives ease and comfort to feet that are tender and sore. If shoes pinch or corns and bunions ache this Antiseptic, Healing Powder will give quick relief. Shake it in your Shoes. Sprinkle it in the Foot-bath. Sold every where.

HOW TO WIN

is the story you can get by addressing a postcard to ANNIE DAVIS, Fort Worth, Texas.

Synonymous.

It was Springer's afternoon off and he thought he would take the children for a little outing.

"My dear," he said, approaching his wife, "suppose we take the children to the zoo today?"

"Why, Will, you promised to take them to mother's."

"All right, if it's all the same to the children."

EAT LESS AND TAKE SALTS FOR KIDNEYS

Take a Glass of Salts if Your Back Hurts or Bladder Bothers.

The American men and women must guard constantly against kidney trouble, because we eat too much and all our food is rich. Our blood is filled with uric acid which the kidneys strive to filter out, they weaken from overwork, become sluggish; the eliminative tissues clog and the result is kidney trouble, bladder weakness and a general decline in health.

When your kidneys feel like lumps of lead; your back hurts or the urine is cloudy, full of sediment or you are obliged to seek relief two or three times during the night; if you suffer with sick headache or dizzy, nervous spells, acid stomach, or you have rheumatism when the weather is bad, get from your pharmacist about four ounces of Jad Salts; take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine. This famous salts is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and has been used for generations to flush and stimulate clogged kidneys; to neutralize the acids in the urine so it no longer is a source of irritation, thus ending bladder disorders.

Jad Salts is inexpensive; cannot injure, makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water beverage, and belongs in every home, because nobody can make a mistake by having a good kidney flushing any time.—Adv.

Ouch!

"You seem to hate that fellow Smith," said Brown. "What is the trouble between you and him?"

"I introduced him to my wife the other day," replied Jones, "and the gabby boob had to say: 'Why, I thought that the lady you were with in New York was your wife.'"—Cincinnati Enquirer.

A Tried Source.

"Tesla says we will soon have to turn to the sun for power."

"Not for the sunshine just yet; we are too busy working on moonshine."

Fitting Punishment.

"They are railroaded this man to prison." "That is all right; he is a train robber."



ITCH!

HERE is an offer backed by one of your personal friends—a man whom you have known for a long time, and in whose honesty you have implicit confidence. This man is your local druggist. He will tell you that he has been selling Hunt's Salve, formerly called Hunt's Cure ever since he has been in business, under the strict guarantee to promptly refund the purchase price to any dissatisfied user.

He will say to you "Take home a box of Hunt's Salve and if it is not successful in the treatment of itching, skin disease, I will promptly refund to you your 75 cents. Hunt's Salve is especially compounded for the treatment of Itch, Eczema, Ringworm, Tetter, and other itching skin diseases.

The General Manager of the Lida Valley Railway Co., Goldfield, Nevada, A. D. Goodenough, writes: "At one time I had a very bad case of Eczema, which troubled me for seven or eight years, and although I tried all kinds of medicine and several doctors, I got no relief until I used Hunt's Salve. It finally cured me.

Thousands of such letters have been received, testifying as to the curative merits of this wonderful remedy.

Don't fail to ask your druggist about Hunt's Salve, formerly called Hunt's Cure. Show him this ad, and ask him if the statements herein made are not correct.

Sold by all reputable druggists everywhere at 75 cents per box, or sent direct on receipt of stamps or money order.

A. B. RICHARDS MEDICINE CO., Sherman, Texas