

WOMEN OF MIDDLE AGE

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It's difficult to convince the office-holder that one bad term doesn't do serve another.

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BELL-ANS 25¢ AND 75¢ PACKAGES EVERYWHERE. **Cuticura Soap** IS IDEAL For the Hands Soap 25c, Ointment 25 and 50c, Talcum 25c.

Matrimonial Adventures For Value Received

BY Edith Barnard Delano Author of "Rags," "Zebulon V.," "The Land of Content," "June," "Two Alike," etc.

AN INTIMATE PORTRAIT OF EDITH BARNARD DELANO

It is difficult to know quite where to begin in writing of Edith Barnard Delano. She has done and is so many things. She began writing when she was little more than a girl, and sold immediately her first ten stories. She adds, "Meanest job there is—writing—but I would not take any other." More stories sold, a great many more, to all the leading magazines, and then she wrote for the screen. But Mrs. Delano is an artist, and the call to return to the "legitimate" writing of fiction was too great. She abandoned the motion-picture field, except vicariously, for her place as a novelist.

On the way back from the post office Anita Prescott stopped at the turn of the road, where the old apple tree was shedding its rosy petals, and looked down at Miriam's house. Just so had she first seen it on that day four years before, when she and Michael were on their honeymoon wandering; yet it was not that moment of companioned ecstasy that had brought her back, but the remembered peace of it. Peace—that was what she had wanted; when she determined to escape from all that was not peace, all that was disillusion, a sudden vision had come to her of the little white house under the elm, the red roof and the smoke wavering up from its chimney, and the strong, smiling woman who had given them milk to drink. Peace—a refuge during the long year that she must wait for freedom; peace that she must have, and that, she told herself, she should find here. Determination, vision, flight; then a visit to a lawyer who "took" cases like hers—as if there could be any other like hers!—and, finally, speech with Miriam at the door of the white house.

"You don't want to board here," Miriam had told her. "I have a room, yes. And I'd just love to have you. But this isn't the place for you. You don't know anything about me." "As much as you know about me." The other shook her head. "I guess it's different," said she. "Folks around here don't have anything to do with me. You'd be lonely."

"I want a place where I can be alone." The woman gave her a steady look; then she said, calmly, as though offering an explanation that did not touch herself at all, "My name's Miriam. Around here they seem to think it ought to be Hagar."

Anita flushed a little under the baldness of it; but she said, "Well—there's a wilderness for most of us. I am—in light, too."

"Come in," Miriam had said; and so far that remained the fullness of explanation between them. Anita was thinking of it today, because of the letter she had brought from the village, the letter postmarked Cleveland and forwarded by the man who took cases like hers. "You will remember that you were warned," her mother had written. "Your hiding yourself away now is nothing more than a pose. It doesn't help things. You can get a divorce here as well as wherever you are, and you will come home at once, where you belong. The sooner it is all over, and we can forget the unfortunate affair."

Anita's lips twisted in a bitter little smile; her eyes hardened. She crossed the road to the grassy bank under the apple tree, and leaned her elbows on the fence, looking off across the mellowing fields. Beyond, a tremulous breath of green along the river; early-plowed furrows gleaming where the setting sun touched them; purple shadows under the hill, appleblossom in her hair, blues and violets under her feet, a world pulsing to new life—this quietude, this peace, peace but for her thoughts—her being here a pose! Oh, yes, they had warned her! Heavens, how they had warned! She had been won by the glamour of a uniform; they didn't know anything about his people; he wasn't their "sort." He was poor; worse, he was visionary, with those talked-of inventions of his; did she suppose she could be happy as a poor man's wife, even though she did have a wee bit of money of her own! And look at the day his lips set, and that hard look that came into his eyes when he faced their perfectly natural opposition to the marriage! She had always been headstrong, always wanted her own way; did she think she could get on with a man like that? Oh, it was unthinkable; so the family

had warned her. And their warnings had but added to her feeling of release, her joyous sense of conquest, when she had gone to her man.

Four years ago—and now it was all over! Her mother had no better word for it than to call it an unfortunate affair, that marriage and the divorce she was waiting for. No better word for those four brimming years of life. Only that, for the first glad confidence of having found her mate; for the happy making of the little home; for her pride in her Michael. That, for the daily growing loneliness, the feeling of being cut off from her own world; for the slowly creeping reserves between them that had been swept away, at lessening intervals, by the re-blossoming of their love; that—for quarrels and kisses, for bitter words and repentant cheek to cheek, for the hours that he was away from her and his increasing absorption in his work and her unreasonable jealousy of it; for the crowning moments of their repledged love—oh, for all of it, everything; Not great things; not even great things, but little things that totaled so disastrously high; and, at last, for her conviction that their marriage had been a mistake, that they were not meant for each other, that the only thing to do was to end it, to end it. Then, her flight; her communicating with him through the man who took cases like hers; and, at last, Miriam's.

Now for a month she had been here, where she had thought peace might dwell; been here watching spring come, watching Miriam, thinking, sap rising, birds on the wing; Miriam, working; Anita—thinking, Miriam plowing, Miriam at work in the garden, sowing early peas, digging parsnips and taking a share to the house next door and leaving them on the doorstep; Anita—watching, thinking, Miriam and her father, that old man who gave her no pleasant word, nor helped in her tasks; the old man with a snarl, a bitter name for her sometimes; the old man sitting in the sun, or in the window with a Bible on his knees; Miriam serene in the kitchen, humming, tramping from stove to table; Anita—idle, thinking. The cow lowing for her calf; Miriam carrying a brimming pail of milk across the grass to the house next door, the girl there who went in when she saw her coming with the gift; Anita—remembering Michael, his obnoxiousness, thinking, thinking. Blue birds nesting; Miriam running to a child who had stumbled on the road, wiping the tears from its face; Anita—thinking of the children Michael had wanted, and she had not. The clod of a youth next door, and the stone he threw at Miriam, and the way she smiled when she put hot water on the cut; Anita—thinking, thinking of the wounds of the spirit that she had kept to herself and resented, thinking, thinking.

"You aren't much like other women," Miriam said to her one day, when she had come back from leaving another thankless gift at the house next door. "You never ask any questions." "Well—you aren't much like other women, yourself," Anita answered. But Miriam laughed, tossed back a stray lock of hair and said, "Oh, yes I am! That's just exactly what I am!" The old man muttered an ugly name; Anita watched Miriam, watched the swelling apple buds, thought. Thoughts that were bruises, memories that flamed and seared; questionings that would not be answered; no help from the nights or days, no bread of understanding, no water of comfort. So had the weeks passed.

The day the letter came she went out after supper and sat on the doorstep. A young moon had left the night to the radiance of gleaming stars; the tender sweetness of the air was pierced by the song of the little frogs enrolling their return to life, and the sadness of past summers, and the joy of the summer to come; the fragrance of the drying fields was like an incense. A world drowning, yet striving to resurrection. . . . Michael . . . at work, of course . . . later, the opening of a door and the night's air coming in; his step on the stairs and the way—the way—Oh! No—no!

Miriam's skirt was brushing Anita's shoulder. "What a night!" she said. There was a basket in her hand. "Don't you want to walk down the road? I have an errand. A man who does work for me sometimes is in trouble."

They went side by side through the song and the incense and the starlight. Miriam intent upon her errand, Anita—remembering, thinking. They went through the village, and those they met passed them by as though they were shadows; they came to a house on a hillside beyond, a low, poor house, where a lamp shone from within. A man came to the door; his eyes in his unshaven face looked as though some fire of pain had burned in them and died, leaving them scorched. He looked at Miriam.

"I can't come to work in the morning," he said.

"I know," she told him, "I'll be there with you, tomorrow. Here's something I've brought for her to eat. You must take some, too. You'll need your strength."

"She ain't eat anything yet," the man said. "She's awful sick—grievin'."

Before they had gone far on their homeward way the man overtook them. "I wanted to ask you—would it be showing respect if I did it for them myself! The sexton charges five dollars, and—but I wouldn't want to do anything that didn't show respect."

Miriam touched his arm. "It would be the most beautiful thing you could do," she said. "You'd always have it to remember—that you had done something for them."

As they neared Miriam's house, she said, softly, "It is such a very beautiful world." "Beautiful!" All of Anita's bitter-

ness, all the dregs of her accumulated thinking, lay in the word.

"Yes, it is. Struggle is not beautiful, nor shirking; but just living is."

"There was death back there, wasn't there? Pain first, and death, and sorrow. Is that beautiful? And your days—the way you have to work, the way people—that stone . . . How can you call it beautiful?"

"I know," said Miriam. "I used to feel that way, too. I hadn't weighed things. I used to think more about what I had. Of course you have to pay for whatever you have. Everybody has to pay, one way or another. But that's only fair. Life's worth it."

"Never! Nothing could be worth—what you have to pay sometimes."

"Ah—" The word was a murmur of protest; then Miriam said, "Look up at that sky! It was a night like this that I went away, with—him. Oh, I knew what I was doing. I knew what they'd—think of me. Rightly, too, I knew I'd have to pay, but I'd made up my mind that what I would have would be worth it. It's the greatest thing there is; I guess everybody pays for it one way or another. We had always loved each other; I threw him over; and after mother died, and I came back here to teach the school and look after father, he was married to someone else. They lived next door. Yes, those are his children. He always worked hard, but he never got on. His wife—she wasn't easy to live with; at last they had to take her to the asylum—hopeless. Her mother came to look after the children. Then—he got tuberculosis. There on the porch, night and day; no chance for him here, but the West—so we went. He lived eight years. And I loved them. Now—I'm paying, that's all. It was worth it."

Oh, those thoughts that sobbed and sang, those thoughts that stung and throbbled and flamed! "Worth it! Then what you had was different, somehow greater—?" "It was just what other women have. Good and bad. The better and the worse. Marriage is like that. Neither of us was an angel. You don't live with any man eight years on honey. His wife died soon, and we were married before the law; but sometimes I remembered what I'd done, and something in me shrank away from myself; sometimes he was lonely, fretful, impatient. We said things; we wanted things. But we had each other. We belonged. Yes, it was worth it."

They walked on through a shadowy place, came out into the starlight again. "You are so strong," whispered Anita.

"Because I came back here to look after them all? I'd have had to pay, anyway. It's life that's strong. You don't get away from life. Life makes you pay, even when you think you're dodging payment. Honest—life is. It gives—but it makes you pay for value received. One way or another."

They were passing the house next door, where the surly girl and the cruel had lived. "One thing you escaped," Anita said. "You must be thankful that you had no children."

Miriam stood still, looked at her. "I would give all the rest of my life," she said, "if I might have put a child of mine into the arms of the man I loved. I would go into any bondage if I might only serve a living child of my own, and it would be freedom, blessed freedom."

Anita shuddered. "Ah—you're not like any other woman! No one else would say that, honestly! Children are care and anxiety and mostly sorrow—do you think anybody deliberately chooses that, today?"

"I know they do! It's a small price to pay for the joy of it, child."

"Never! It's not worth it! I don't believe anyone honestly thinks it is!"

Miriam walked on. "Come with me tomorrow," she said. "I think perhaps you'll understand, then."

So, in the morning, they walked the road together again; this time Miriam had a great sheaf of blossoms in her arms. They came to a quiet place on a hill, and there they met the man of the night before. There was a small box at his feet, carefully wrapped, and in his hand a spade. He began to dig, and as the yellow earth became a mound Anita drew back, shuddering.

"One was a boy and one was a girl," the man said. "Twins. The others is all girls."

"Yes," said Miriam, softly. "Two to love. Two to remember."

"We'll do that," said the man. "Both of us will do that."

Anita's hand went to her throat. They waited until the mound was higher, until the man stood waist-deep in the earth.

"I guess it's enough," he said, looking up at Miriam. "They're so little." She gave him the bunches of bloom. "Make them a soft bed," she told him. He took them—blossoms that would never be fruit—and lined the grave with them. Anita watched his mired fingers touching their pink and whiteness, caressing them, laying them so that no stems protruded. Then he clambered out, and knelt beside the box on the ground.

"It isn't everybody has twins," Miriam said. "You've had them."

"That's what my wife said. I'm glad we had them, anyway. Ben," she said. "He laid the little box down upon the soft bed of flowers."

Anita, feeling as though the wings of her spirit were beating against her heart, stumbled away into the woods. Last year's leaves underfoot; a dead thrush in the path; fern unfolding, and—the earth falling from the spade, back there . . . Life, that was life, everywhere . . . Honest life, that gave and gave, and made you pay . . . Bread of understanding . . . Water of comfort . . . Michael.

She found their little house locked and unlighted; she guessed that he had not used it since her flight. She found him on the old couch in his office, an arm thrown over his eyes in the gesture of sleep that she remembered. Her picture was still on his desk; but the littered untidiness of his papers, his crumpled clothes, the weary relaxation of him, all impressed her as never before with the pitiable helplessness of the male, his unconscious dependence on woman-made comfort.

"Michael—Michael—" Oh, on her knees—just to touch . . . him . . . The eyes that met hers were like that of other men's who had lost and suffered, blackened from a fire that burned too hot and too long. "Nita!" he whispered. Then, sitting up, "Nita! It's—Nita."

"Not a sob—speech first, and her hands upon him. 'Michael! I've come back. I'm sorry, Michael. I didn't understand!'"

"Understand—" "It's you I want, Michael—and life—to be together. I'm willing to pay—" His grasp on her arms hurt her, but the hurt made her glad. "Nita! What are you talking about! Pay?"

"Pay—yes! I've found out, Michael—I've thought, oh, thought! I was wrong—I wanted happiness, and I wasn't willing to pay for it. I thought you could have, without paying. I know better now. You have to pay for everything—life makes you do that, whether you want to or not. But it's worth it, Michael, it's worth it."

His face close to hers, his eyes smoldered with a gleam of fire in them deep. "Worth it!"

"Ah—yes! You, and me, together! That's the great thing. Nothing else counts. Life—I want all of it, good days and bad; all our joy and even—even sorrow. And children—I want children; and work, and—and wanting and hoping—Oh, I want you! You, Michael! I'm willing to pay whatever I must . . ."

Now it was his arms that hurt, and his heart on hers that made the singing. "Oh, my darling! Life can't be long enough to pay for all that! I need you so . . ."

"Oh, spring and blossoming summer, and the fall of leaves. Oh, life and its song and its battles! Oh, the dear weight of his head on her breast, her hand on his heart! Oh, promise—fulfillment!"

"Yes, dear—yes! I'm here with you . . ."

EARLY FORM OF CIGARETTE

Columbus' Historian Tells of Methods of Using Tobacco as Practiced by the Indians.

Of all things American, nothing is more so than the cigarette. When for the first time a European set foot in the western hemisphere, those Indian natives of San Salvador, who so startled the brave Genoese by blowing smoke from their mouths and nostrils, were really smoking crude and primitive cigarettes—tobacco wrapped in the leaves of Indian corn. Bartholomew de Las Casas, the apostle of the Indies, who edited the Journal of Columbus, in his "Historia de las Indias," tells of two men of Columbus' party who returned from an expedition inland with an account of how the aborigines were accustomed to the smoke of tobacco. Their manner of smoking, as narrated by Las Casas, plainly suggests the cigarette, and this is accounted the earliest reference to the use of tobacco in that form.

The natives of the New world, said the Spaniard, "wrap the tobacco in a certain leaf, in the manner of a musket formed of paper," and, "having lighted one end of it, by the other they suck, absorb or receive that smoke inside with their breath."

An Old Acquaintance. He was the typical masher, and when he boarded the street car he looked carefully down the aisle before he sat down, and chose a seat beside a pretty young girl. The passengers were immediately interested, although inclined to resent the young man's forwardness.

As the man sat down he looked carefully at the girl, smiled at her and tipped his hat.

"I beg your pardon, but haven't we met somewhere before?" he asked. The girl gave him her best icy stare.

"Yes, I think we have," she admitted. "If I am not mistaken you are the man who used to haul our ashes."—Kansas City Star.

Great Luck. A little golf story from New York. A wife, green at the game, said to her husband, "I had fine luck this morning. I did the nine holes in par." He looked skeptical. "I did," she insisted. "Of course it was par. Haven't you always told me that par is 100?"

Thought for the Day. There is never a valley so deep that we cannot see out if we will but look

After Every Meal WRIGLEY'S

Chew your food well, then use WRIGLEY'S to aid digestion. It also keeps the teeth clean, breath sweet, appetite keen. The Great American Sweetmeat



He says he has smoked more Edgeworth than any other living man

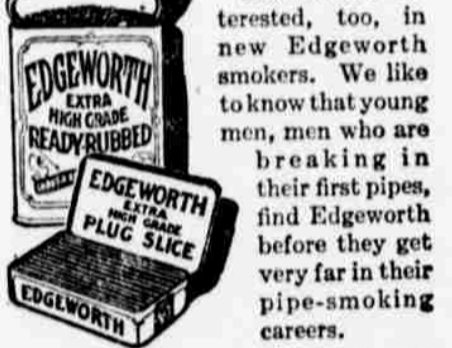
Let Mr. Baldwin's letter give you the facts, and you will see he has some justification for his claims.

H. F. BALDWIN Signs and Show Cards Cloth Business 60 Clarke Street, Cor. Grant Burlington, Vermont

Larus & Brother Company Richmond, Va.

I think that I am entitled to be called a smoker. I have used the Edgeworth Slice Plug between twenty and twenty-five years. When I commenced using it I was selling hardware on the road. One of my customers who kept a general store told me that he had just received a new tobacco and wished that I would try it. He gave me a box for which he charged me 20c. He made a mistake, as it was selling at that time for 25c. I liked it so well that I made it a point to ask for it in every store in the different towns that I made; but few had it. The next time that I called on this customer I bought six boxes, which would last until I got around again. I still continued to ask for it in the different towns and tried to induce the dealers to stock it. In 1905 or 1907 I went to So. Carolina and stayed there three years. I was surprised not to be able to get it there. At that time I was in Beaufort, S. C., and made frequent trips to Savannah, Ga., and Charleston, S. C., and was unable to get it in either of these cities. Finally I ordered some direct from you, but they do not take the place of the old pipe filled with Edgeworth. I am sixty-one years of age and still think that it is the best tobacco on the market. I don't think there is a man living who has smoked any more Edgeworth than I. What do you think? Yours truly, (Signed) H. F. Baldwin

It is always pleasing to hear from old Edgeworth smokers, and we would like to know if this record is the best ever made.



But we are interested, too, in new Edgeworth smokers. We like to know that young men, men who are breaking in their first pipes, find Edgeworth before they get very far in their pipe-smoking careers.

So we have a standing invitation to send free samples of Edgeworth to all who ask for them. If you haven't tried Edgeworth, we have a sample package here containing Plug Slice and Ready-Rubbed that is only waiting for your name and address.

When you write for it, address Larus & Brother Company, 80 South 21st Street, Richmond, Va.

To Retail Tobacco Merchants: If your jobber cannot supply you with Edgeworth, Larus & Brother Company will gladly send you prepaid by parcel post a one- or two-dozen carton of any size of Edgeworth Plug Slice or Ready-Rubbed for the same price you would pay the jobber.



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