

"That rather floored her, I think."

Denny gave Mildred a quick, searching glance.

"Oh please come!" urged Mildred. "Granny would throw a fit if we should become friends. She's trying to scare me into submission to that awful will of hers by threatening to leave you all her money, you know. But I don't care if she does. I'm going to marry Jimmy anyway."

"Jimmy?" gasped Denny incredulously.

"Why—you've got a Jimmy too!" exclaimed Mildred delightedly. "How perfectly delicious. Come along and tell me all about him."

Shee linked her arm through Denny's and started back toward the roadster she had left parked in the drive.

"My Jimmy's an artist. He's the most awful dear—I adore him," she confided. "What's your Jimmy?"

"A—a plumber," said Denny. "Really? Where does he work? Tell me all about him. And about yourself, too!"

By the time they reached the Country club Milly had the details.

"Do you mind if I tell them about the bargain basement?" she asked. "They'll be thrilled beyond words. Really!"

They were. They fairly besieged Denny with questions.

"That," announced one dark-haired little girl, "is what I call living. Really doing something—anything!"

Envy was in her eyes as she gazed at Denny.

"You'd change your mind quick enough," thought Denny.

Nevertheless she saw no reason to lessen the impression she had made.

As they returned home, Milly turned a glowing face toward her.

"You made a hit!" she said. "I'm going to run up and tell Granny all about it before I dress for dinner."

Denny went to her own room. Spread out upon the bed was a smart little orchid satin frock for that evening and all the things that went with it—and under it.

From the bathroom came the sound of running water, and Moulton appeared.

"I've laid out your things, Miss," said she austerely. "It's madam's orders that I help you with your dressing. I've taken the liberty of drawing your bath."

"Did madam also suggest that you make sure I wash behind my ears?" demanded Denny.

Moulton managed to control her tongue. "Not at all," she admitted. "Then please don't try to," suggested Denny.

Eleven people waited downstairs, all dominated by Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm, regal in black satin and diamonds in old-fashioned setting.

"This," she announced, "is my adopted granddaughter, Denise Lufdon."

The dinner itself was deadly. Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm herself setting the key by relapsing into a grim silence.

"Egypt's queen!" thought Denny. "If this is the way they eat in society, give me Child's."

The only ones who did not seem depressed were Milly and a tanned young man with very white teeth who sat beside each other across the table from Denny.

The moment dinner was finished Milly's companion sought Denny out.

"I wonder if we couldn't skip off somewhere," he suggested audaciously. "Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm is going to take 40 winks and everybody else will be comatose for the next half hour."

Denny glanced up at him. He reminded her somehow of Jimmy. "Please come," he urged. "I've arranged for a moon on the sea."

She hesitated and was lost. The wind was off the sea, fireflies lighted up the half murk of the Italian garden.

"Milly," he announced, "told me all about you at dinner. What did you think of that, by the way?"

Denny hesitated.

"I'll say it for you," he offered. "They all try to kill time all day and finally murder it brutally at dinner. I wouldn't have appeared if Milly hadn't phoned that I'd be sorry if I didn't. I would have been, too," he added.

Denny slanted a glance at him. "Say," she commented, "you're a fast little worker, aren't you?"

"I've got to be," he retorted. "I'll bet Milly will manage to tell you all my bad points before bed time." He laid impulsive fingers over hers.

"Hold your breath!" he commanded. "The moon is about to rise!"

He was the first to break the silence that followed.

"A shooting star!" he exclaimed. "Do you know what that's a sign of?"

"Sure," retorted Denny coolly. "It's a sign somebody's apt to get

their face slapped if they don't look out."

The white of his teeth flashed in a frankly unabashed smile.

"I like you!" he assured her buoyantly. "You're the real thing."

"I like your nerve!" observed Denny.

Stacy Ames was, in his way, almost irresistible. And against him Milly felt called upon to issue warning at bed time.

"He always rushes a girl that way," Milly assured Denny. "Still, he's really a dear, although his mother has done her best to spoil him. She was furious when he disappeared with you—and so was Granny. You see she wants me to marry him—"

"She does!"

Milly nodded. He sort of had a crush of me when he came back from France and—well, I couldn't see him. That was enough to set



"A shooting star!" he exclaimed. "Do you know what that's a sign of?"

"Sure," returned Denny. "It's a sign somebody's about to get their face slapped."

Granny off. Granny is that way. A thoroughly hateful old woman—but I'm kind of fond of her. . . . My dear! What is happening in the bathroom?"

Denny looked about, startled. The bathroom door was just ajar, through the crevice came feather wisps of steam.

"My!" gasped Denny. "I left the water running—"

Milly sprang up. "What a lark!" she cried. "You must have turned the steam faucet by mistake. The room is full of it."

The expression on Denny's face, however, made her change her tone. "Don't worry," she advised. "We can turn it off."

They tried. But the bath was like a boiler.

"I—I almost reached it that time," coughed Denny. "Perhaps next time—"

"Let's not bother any more," suggested Milly. "I'll ring for Hawkins."

Hawkins appeared. "We want you to shut off the steam faucet in the bathroom," Milly commanded.

Hawkins managed to enter the bathroom.

"The faucet seems stuck," he announced and coughed. "Beggings your pardon, Miss, I'd better shut the steam off downstairs and have somebody in the morning to fix the faucet."

"Do so," directed Milly.

"Then, when Hawkins had retired, she turned to Denny.

"Don't worry—the plumbing's forever getting out of order," she said. She rose. "I'd better go to bed. Jimmy—my Jimmy, is painting surf at Rockport and I promised to be on hand by ten to motor him over. Night-night."

They met again at breakfast served in a bright little morning room. Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm, as Milly explained, never appeared before lunch.

"I'm commanded to appear before her at nine-thirty," she added. "I fear the worst."

"I'll bet, she added irrelevantly,

"that Stacy Ames will be around this morning to see you. He has a peach of a new roadster—a Lenhard Double Six. Stacy is a dear!" she went on. "Of course he's an awful will-o-the-wisp, but he's fallen hard for you. Trust another woman to see that. If you want a Lenhard Double Six, here's your chance."

sweetly. "How are you and Katie Kennedy getting along?"

"Fine," he retorted.

"I knew she was just the girl for you," she assured him. "And she's always been crazy about you, Jimmy."

Jimmy grunted. "I'm glad to hear that somebody is," he managed.

Denny made no reply.

"I wonder—" thought Milly, and Denny wondered why Milly smiled.

"I'm sorry to leave you to Granny for lunch," Milly apologized as she rose, "but I'll be back for afternoon tea—if you survive. And by the way—where did you say your Jimmy worked?"

That surprised Denny, but she gave the desired information.

"Thank you," acknowledged Milly. "I wondered if I remembered rightly."

And then, with commendable blitheness, she departed, leaving Denise to pass out on to the terrace with nothing in particular to do—and all day to do it in.

"I'll say this for the bargain basement," Denny was thinking. "At least there's always something doing there."

Eventually she found herself down by the boathouse and there she seated herself.

"He," she mused, "is just red-headed and stubborn enough to marry Katie Kennedy to spite me, I suppose. Well—he can!"

When, an hour later, she started slowly back to the house, Stacy Ames suddenly appeared.

"I've got a new boat waiting," he announced joyously. "Will you take a ride with me?"

"I'll be ready in a jiff," she promised him.

Inside her room, however, she stopped short. The door to the bathroom stood open; on a rose-colored rug—inevitably—reposed an open bag of plumber's tools. The plumber stood back to her, lean and lithe and just six feet with his shoes on. The problem in plumbing engrossed him deeply, he failed to hear Denny. And that gave her all the time she needed to recover herself—precisely a second.

"Hello," said she coolly, "what are you doing here? Oh, it's me!" she assured him, meeting incredulity with all serenity, and asked

"Introduce yourself," suggested Denny. "We're not exactly on speaking terms this morning—"

"I will," agreed Milly, but paused to remark: "You'd better not keep granny waiting. I told her right out she was bluffing and she is perfectly furious."

Then she disappeared into the bath room. Denny heard her blithe greeting to Jimmy. But she scorned eavesdropping, and lifting her firm little chin very high, she left the room.

The chimes in the steeple of St. Peters-by-the-Sea were sounding 11, exquisitely, as she entered the intimate domain of her professed fairy-godmother, who, at that moment, looked more like a fire-breathing ogre.

"I hope," snapped Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm, "that you'll learn that one of my little peculiarities is that I prefer people to come at once when I send for them, and not at their convenience. Sit down, I have something to say to you."

"I prefer to stand," Denny retorted in a voice that matched Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm's. "That's one of my little peculiarities. I got used to it in the bargain basement, you know."

Now as to what followed after this auspicious beginning neither Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm nor Denny ever had much to say, but at the end of 10 minutes Denny emerged, and, walking down the marble staircase with her head held higher than ever, almost walked into Stacy Ames.

"Say!" he announced reproachfully. "I'd begun to think you'd given me the go-by."

"Oh!" she retorted, startled. "I—I—I'm sorry, but—"

Exactly five minutes later Jimmy gave the steam faucet a twirl and threw the Stillson wrench into his bag.

"I'm sorry," Milly murmured helplessly. "I just thought that if I could get you two together you'd forgive and forget—"

He stooped and picked up his bag. "I," he announced, "wouldn't forgive her if she got down on her knees and begged me to. And there's that."

"I don't think you're very nice," flashed Milly.

"Neither does she," he retorted, "so that makes it quite unanimous, I suppose."

And thereupon he took his departure down the backstairs over which he had come.

The door by which he had entered gave into a latticed airway. He had left his flivver drawn up so that just the rear end showed beyond this. He lifted the cover up, hurled his bag in, slammed the cover down and lighted a match.

"You," said the softest voice imaginable, "weren't very long, were you?"

Jimmy could only gape incredulously.

"If you don't want me here," Denny challenged quickly. "I'll—"

Jimmy swallowed. "I do," he said fervently, "but I thought—"

A blush ran from her throat to her lovely hair.

"Oh, Jimmy!" she broke in impetuously, "I suppose we'll get like the McCarthys and quarrel all the time, but I'd rather quarrel the rest of my life with you than any man I know!"

"You mean—"

She nodded. "I think," she assured him, "that I might have gotten a Lenhard Double-Six at that, but—oh, Jimmy, I love our flivver!"

She thrust open a battered door invitingly, and he got in.

"But you said," he began, "that the old lady—"

"Did you think," she demanded, "that I'd stay here getting the willies while that Katie Kennedy grabbed you? I guess not!"

Then, swiftly, she snuggled up against him.

"Home, James—dearest!" she commanded. And, glancing up at him from under her beautiful lashes, she added, "Mid pleasures and palaces—there's no place like it, is there, Jimmy?"

He swallowed. "And you're giving them all up?"

"Well," confessed Denny. "Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm is awfully mad at me now but I wouldn't be surprised if she'd be sport enough to send me the stuff she bought for me anyway. It — it would make a lovely trousseau, Jimmy!"

And Mrs. Winthrop-Chisholm—being sport enough—did.

(Copyright, 1923.)

A new type of speedboat has been designed in London to travel at 75 miles an hour. The craft is unbreakable and can be launched from the high deck of an ocean liner simply by being dropped overboard.

ADVERTISEMENT.
How Many Pounds Would You Like to Lose in a Week?

If you are fat and want to lose weight, I will send you a sample of the famous Rid-O-Fat treatment absolutely Free. Do not send any money—just your name and address to Whinton Laboratories, 2228 Coca Cola Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.