

## The Married Life of Helen and Warren

The Visitation of Warren's Family Goad Helen to a Rockless Decision.

Her right hand protected with a rubber glove, Helen dipped the sponge in a cup of gasoline and proceeded to clean her gray satin slippers.

The heels and toes well moistened, she placed them in the open bathroom window, hoping the odor would evaporate before she dressed for dinner.

The bathroom door closed, she did not hear the bell, but now she heard at the sound of voices in the hall.

"Mrs. Edwards is here, ma'am," Anna knocked at the door.

"Very well, I'll be right out," Helen fluffed her hair by the mirrored door of the medicine chest.

It never failed! Warren's sister always came at the most inconvenient times.

"Whew! The whole place reeks of gasoline," sniffed Carrie as Helen reluctantly emerged from the bathroom.

"Yes, I was cleaning some slippers. Come in my room, you won't notice it there."

"I can only stay a moment," taking an envelope from her handbag, she dropped on the window seat.

"Just came in to bring Aunt Emma's letter."

"Aunt Emma?" Warren's aunt never wrote unless she wanted something. With deep misgivings, Helen read the letter.

Dear Carrie:—Will it be convenient for me to stay with you next week? I'm having more trouble with my teeth. That plate I had made last year always hurts me when I eat, so I've decided to have another one made.

I'm not going back to Dr. Moffat. The plate never fit and he charged me \$116. I think I'll try your dentist.

Let me know if next week will be convenient. If not, I can put it off until the week after. Tell Bobbie I'm bringing him something nice.

With love,  
AUNT EMMA.

"It's too bad she's having more trouble," murmured Helen, replacing the letter in the envelope. "But perhaps it's just as well she should try another dentist. I'll ask Warren about the one he's going to."

"That wasn't what I wanted to see

you about," Carrie smoothed the gloves in her lap. "We've been SO upset the last few weeks. Bobbie's just getting over the whooping cough and Jane's so disagreeable when we have company. I think Aunt Emma had better come here."

"Why, Carrie, we had her last year and the year before. Surely it's your turn now?"

"Well, it couldn't come at a worse time for me. Besides everything else, we're going to have the guest room done over. I've been trying to get that papered for months."

"You don't have to have it done just when Aunt Emma's coming. Even if you do, she could sleep on that couch in the library."

"She wouldn't be comfortable on that. She's very fussy about her bed."

"Then why can't she go to a hotel?"

"You know Aunt Emma! After paying for her teeth, she'll think she can't afford it."

"Well, it doesn't seem fair they should all make a convenience of staying here when they come to town," flushed Helen. "I'm always having some of Warren's relatives—they're all been here over and over again. Aunt Emma, Uncle Ned and Cousin Minnie! I don't mind it occasionally, but when it becomes a regular—"

"I'm afraid you're rather selfish, Helen. We all have to inconvenience ourselves at times, with her most exasperating self-righteous air."

"Carrie, I inconvenience myself for your family a great deal more than you do! There's hardly a month I don't have some of them here over night. It's not fair!" she flung back, starting in to answer the library phone.

The receiver felt chill against the indignant flush that heated her face and neck.

"Hello! Oh, how are you, Mrs. Stevens? . . . Why, yes, I guess he's as good as any of them. He covered that couch in the library. . . . I have it right here—hold the phone."

As Helen rummaged through her desk for the address of the upholsterer, a yellow envelope gleamed out from a pigeon hole of letters.

That telegram from Janet! Another of Warren's relatives who was always presuming on her hospitality.

The upholsterer's address given to Mrs. Stevens, with mounting resentment Helen paused for a hostile glance at the telegram.

"Will be in New York tomorrow for a few days. If convenient will stop with you."

"Janet?" That was hardly a month ago—and now Carrie expected her to take Aunt Emma!

She wouldn't! It was an imposition! The whole family simply used her! She must think of some excuse why she could not have Aunt Emma.

In a flash, it came! Helen's ingenuity rarely failed her. She would pretend that this telegram had just come! As she must have Janet—she could not have Aunt Emma.

The date—would that betray her? But a hasty scrutiny of the blurred stamp was reassuring. The date was undecipherable. And Carrie's sharp tongue had long ago antagonized Janet, they neither visited nor corresponded—an added assurance that her ruse would not be discovered.

As always in an emergency, Helen's mind worked fast. She was framing a plausible excuse for every possible contingency. If Carrie learned that Janet had not come—another telegram saying she had been delayed could be invented.

Darting noiselessly out to the hall, she slipped the telegram under the door, then hurried back to her own room where Carrie was waiting impatiently.

"Mrs. Stevens wanted the address of an upholsterer," apologetically. "Well, will you write Aunt Emma or shall I?" with crisp finality.

"Write her what?" flamed Helen. "That she can come here. The next time she can stay with me—but I really can't have her now."

Helen was standing by the dresser playing with the cord of her electric curler.

"Very well, Carrie, I'll write her with well feigned reluctance. "But I really think—Isn't that the bell?"

"I didn't hear it. When you write, say 'Bobbie's had the whooping cough and I'm very much upset—but I'll write her in a few days.'"

"I'm sure that was the bell, Anna's so deaf," hurrying out to the hall. When she came back she was scanning the telegram.

"From Janet!" Then with simulated dismay she read aloud the message.

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gazed at the betraying grocery memorandum. There was no denying the writing—it was unmistakably hers!

"Eh? What's all this?" demanded Warren sternly.

"Nothing at all, except that Helen tried to work off an old telegram," was his sister's acid comment.

"Work off an old telegram?" the subterfuge not fully dawning on Warren.

"Yes, she said the bell rang—flew to the door and brought this back. Of course I thought it had just been delivered. But she forgot to rub her grocery list off the envelope!"

"What's the idea?" an ominous note in Warren's voice as he confronted Helen. "What'd you do that for?"

"Why, it's perfectly clear—she didn't want to entertain Aunt Emma. But I think she will now," Carrie gathered up her gloves. "I'll write Aunt Emma tonight that as Bobbie's been sick and I'm so upset—"

—you'll be delighted to have her."

Well, I must hurry, I've just time to get the 6:10."

Then, at the door, she flung back: "Really, Helen, you're very ingenious, but your schemes don't always work. You might've put this one over if you'd erased your grocery list. Well, so long! Hope you'll enjoy Aunt Emma's visit!"

(Copyright 1922.)

Next Week—Helen Delves Into Spiritualism.

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Your annual festivities start tomorrow night at the "Den," so I grasp this opportunity to extend my congratulations and best wishes for a successful year's reign.

During the third year of your reign my firm, THE PANTORIUM, became one of your devoted subjects. We have grown and prospered along with Nebraska and Omaha, and so long as Your Highness occupies the throne you can count on our fealty and loyalty in all your undertakings.

Your unselfish devotion to the interests of our City and State has inspired in us a Civic pride, than which no city in this broad land of ours possesses greater.

You have proved once again that "in union there is strength," for we have accomplished en masse many things that we never would have accomplished as individuals.

Of all the agencies working for Omaha and Nebraska, I consider AK-SAR-BEN the greatest, and I hope to see the day when every man in Omaha will be one of your Henchmen. You'll notice I say "Henchmen" (we are all your "Subjects"), but a Henchman is one who has paid his \$10 for the privilege of being such. Come on in, fellows!

Devotedly yours,

Guy Liggett

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