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Sant Patrick drove out the snakes from this shamrock Isle.

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YOU MUST ENCLOSURE A STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE
I'll never go up to Lake Eden again. I only wish I'd never gone there that night, that terrible night. I wouldn't have, either, if my girl Joanie hadn't called me up at the last minute to tell me she couldn't go with me to the big May Day dance at the school because—of all things—she had the measles!

She was giggling when she told me about it. "Oh, Ken, honestly, I just feel so silly!" she said. "Imagine, being sixteen years old and having the measles!"

Well, I had to laugh, too. But actually I was kind of relieved that our date was off for that night. My conscience had been bothering me something awful about going off and enjoying myself after getting a look at Pa's face at the breakfast table early this morning.

Gosh, he'd looked terrible. He'd just sat there, his eyes big and dark looking from not getting much rest, his mouth tight, and he'd hardly said two words all during the meal. I figured I knew pretty much what was on his mind, all right—bills and Ma being sick. That was probably all he thought about lately.

After all, Ma had been sick for almost a year now. Doc Cramer said it was some kind of anemia and some other complaint, too—woman trouble. Most of the time she just wandered around the house like a lost soul or sat there in the living room, looking like a little gray shadow in Pa's big armchair, sewing or embroidering or just staring off into space.

Pa's been working practically day and night to make ends meet, what with all those extra medical expenses and with the special things Doc Cramer said Ma had to have to build her up. We were just plain lucky to keep our heads above water, the farm being like it was—(Continued on page 8)

"Please, Anna," Pa pleaded. "Go back to bed. It made me sick. Pa didn't care about Ma—he was just trying to ease his conscience!

"Your Mother Must Never Know"

I caught my father cheating

Pa had done a terrible thing, but he'd turned to God, and God had forgiven him. The trouble was, I couldn't!
“How a Wonderful New
MONEY-MAKING IDEA
can put up to $50 more a week
into your pocketbook—

just for visiting at home with friends
and neighbors in your spare time”

BY HELEN HARLEY

In the three or four minutes it is going
to take you to read this page, you are going
to make a discovery that I know you will
remember the rest of your life. That simple
discovery is based upon the fact that when
people stop thinking about selling and concen-
crate on helping, they have unlocked the
key to undreamed of profits!

Actually, all of us are salesmen in one
fashion or another. I suppose you can say
that I hold my job as Placement Director
because I “sold” the company on my ability,
but that I am married to my husband
because he was “sold” on my looks and
talents. But when we make the mistake
of thinking about selling as “the act of con-
vincing people to buy something so that
we selfishly can pocket a commission of
a dollar or two for ourselves,” we fre-
quently defeat our purpose!

The WONDERFUL NEW MONEY-
MAKING IDEA that you read about in
the headline above is simply that we have
been able to show hundreds of women all
over the country that there is untold treasure
awaiting them when they think
and act as Friendship Counselors instead
of trying to be saleswomen. How much
easier the dollars roll in when they concen-
trate on helping, and forget about selling!

Growing Need for More
Friendship Counselors

Just what do we mean by a Friendship
Counselor? We mean a person who serves
her community (mostly friends and neigh-
bors) select the right kind of correspond-
ence notes, stationery, greeting cards,
table decorations, gifts and gift wrappings
that correctly express the individual’s
feelings and personality. Whether your
friends wish to convey best wishes, re-
membrances or condolences, they always
know they can count on you as their
Friendship Counselor for the smart, cor-
rect form of communication.

Also a Chance to Go On a
Wonderful Shopping Spree!

Whether you are one
of our newest Counse-
lor or a veteran, you
can take advantage of
a $5,000 worth of prizes
and prize-money, just for a little
extra effort. Only
10 minutes extra
every day could get
you as much as
$500 cash extra,
for shopping.

Can anybody become a Friendship Coun-
selor? Well, not exactly anybody. But we
don’t care if you are 16 or 66, and whether
you are a high school graduate or not. It
is more important that you have some
artistic taste; and a comfortable place in
which to visit with friends and neighbors
where you can provide the kind of help
they frequently need.

Pays You Up to $10 a Visit

Best of all, you’re not tied down to this
kind of job. You can spend your time
when and as you like. Your earnings, of
course, will depend on your activity, but
earning $50 a week between now and
Christmas is not unusual. Some times just
a few minutes pleasant visiting nets as
much as $10! And you’ll be warmly
thanked by your help!

Coupon Below Brings
FREE Information

Our new Friendship Counselor’s Kit
with complete information is yours for
the asking. Why not send for it today, and
find out all about this wonderful new
spare-time money-making opportunity.
You are under no obligation, should you
decide that you are not interested. With
the Kit we also send you our FREE
CATALOG, which provides a complete
display of the Personal Stationery, Cor-
respondence Notes, Greeting Cards for
All Occasions, Table Decorations, Gift
Wrappings, made available through Friend-
ship Counselors, as well as our exclusive
Name-Imprinted Christmas Card Se-
lection. Also included are 4 boxed assort-
ments of Christmas Cards sent for your approval.

It’s a real opportunity to establish your-
self as an expert in a growing field
that pays good money. Why not act today?

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new boxed assortments of Christmas Cards on
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I can go on your Wonderful Shopping Spree!

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City
State
Zone
hardly ever even paying for itself, let alone a lot of extras. I had to get used to taking on some odd jobs, like repairing a barn or a fence for one of the neighbors or putting a new porch on a house—things like that. He was pretty good at that sort of thing.

What bothered me about it all was that I wasn’t doing much of anything to help out with all those extra bills. Oh, I helped out every afternoon and did all the chores, and I spent most of my week ends working, but I’d wished for a long time I could just quit school and take on a real job. I went to work at Riley’s Garage in town. But, gosh, when I brought it up to Pa one night, he just about blew his top.

“Quit school?” he exploded. “What do you think I’ve been working my field head off for, anyway? To get you through school, that’s what! So you can have some kind of decent job, so you won’t have to scrape out a mealy living from a few fields across the hill. Off. I don’t want you messing up your schooling, not at this late date! You can work all you want during the summer, but during the school months you study, you boys!”

I heard, all right. And whatever Pa said was law around our place. But I still felt guilty with Pa working his head off every day while I skated like me sitting around school all day. Yet I couldn’t help but get a real warm feeling of pride, hearing my pa talk that way. So many of the kids in our area had no school and had to go right to work on farms and I knew Pa wanted something so much better for me.

Well, naturally, I didn’t tell Joanie I was glad our date was off. She’d been talking about that big May Day dance for weeks now. I told her how sorry I was that she was sick and how much I was going to miss her while she was laid up. She said she’d be all right, and hung up. Off the phone, I jumped on my bike and headed for Lake Eden where Pa was putting a new roof on one of the summer cottages. I gave him a hand now, I figured. He sure needed some help.

His face just seemed to haunt me—those deep lines around his mouth giving him such a tight, grim look and those eyes. I was always one of his favorites, as if he were carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. Why, he looked no more like Pa than the man in the moon! Not that he was ever one of these easy-laughing, kidding kind of men. But I never saw him so nearly licked by anything as he was since Ma got sick. Why, he’d even taken to drinking some lately, and he’d always been dead set against any sort of liquor.

“There’ll be no drinking in my house!” he’d stormed once when he’d caught the smell of beer on my breath. It was fine, of course, for the other fellows and I had a couple of glasses of beer—why, all the other guys did, I don’t give a hang about the other guys!’” he bellowed. “I never had to drink that—that will to give myself false courage. Or drag some nobody living under my roof is going to!”

Well, I guess these days he needed a little of that “false courage,” after all. Anyway, when I came downstairs one night last week to get a glass of water, he was standing beside the big cupboard in the kitchen. He had his hand on the lid. I saw him reach up and take a bottle from the highest shelf of the cupboard. It had been hidden back of some canned tomatoes.

He tipped the bottle up and took a big drink. Then he stood there for a minute, sort of leaning against the cupboard. Breathing hard. Finally he straightened. I could see the sweat on his face from back and walked over to the back door. He went on out without even seeing me.

I just stood there, stunned, Pa, drinking? Boy, he must really be feeling rotten and down at it.

Well, it wouldn’t be long now. I thought, swinging my bike off the main road and onto the little dirt one leading up to the lake. Pretty soon I’d be out of you go for the summer and able to take on a job.

I was sure deserted around the lake-front now. You’d never believe that in another month the place would be crawling with folks in Prince City, trying to beat the heat. Today it was plenty warm—in fact, almost like a June day. I even stopped and pulled off my shirt. I didn’t hear any pounding when I came up to the place. The one Pa was working on, and I thought maybe he’d given up already and gone on back home. It would sure do him good to get away from it for a spell. Maybe I’d stick around, though, for a while and do a little work on the roof myself—nail down a few boards for him and surprise him. There was still a little while before the sun was going down.

I’d just stepped up on the front steps when I heard a sound in the little screened-in front porch. It was a soft little rustling sound. Then I heard voices—

“Darling,” a woman was saying. “My sweet, sweet darling...”

Then there was a man’s voice, just a sort of murmur so that I couldn’t hear what he was saying, but I felt a tiny little prickle at the back of my neck. I stepped through the door into the porch and stood there, paralyzed.

It was Pa, Ma, and Joanie, but I could still see the woman, lying on the porch swing. I could even tell the color of the two-piece play suit he was wearing—it was pink. She had her bandage across her eye, but I thought he was pulling down her sights. The man kept saying, “Meg, Meg,” over and over in a husky kind of voice.

I felt sick all at once, sort of caved in. I clung to the wall when you get hit hard in the stomach! It was Pa—Pa and some woman!

He was down on his knees beside her with his back to me, but then I saw him—in the near dark. I could recognize the familiar thick, sun-redened neck, the broad shoulders under the tan work shirt, the big square hands on the chair. I stood there, not able to move, staring at them. Then I saw those familiar big square fingers reach around and up the back of the woman was wearing.

I practically staggered into the house. All I could think was, how could he do this to Ma? How could he?

I was glad she was in her room so I wouldn’t have to face her, knowing what he’d done. When I got up on to my own room and fell down on the bed, I had to think. I had to figure out somehow what I was going to do.

I sat all at once, I should tell Ma—that’s what I should do! She had a right to know what he was doing to her. But how do you tell your own mother a thing like that? To say, "Ma, quiet and sweet and trusting—how do you say, a thing like that to her? You can’t just walk up to her and say, “Ma, I just caught Pa making love to another woman!"

It would nearly kill her, learning that the only man in the world she’d ever cared about, the man she’d been married to for almost twenty years, the man she’d put into the house for security and protection, had betrayed her! No, I couldn’t tell her.

I kept remembering things—like the way it had been before she’d gotten so sick. Sometimes when we were sitting at the supper table. Pa would tease her in that gruff, dry way of his, and her face would turn red, and she’d say something like, “Oh, Sam Harwood, you’re not trying to get me all flustered, Hon-estly, you men!”

She’d say it like she was really exasperated with him, but then she’d always reach over and put her slim little hand into his big hand, and pull it to her. She loved him so much. She loved everything about him, even the way he teased her.

I got up and began to walk back and forth from one end of the room to the other. I just couldn’t take that awful knowledge. I didn’t hurt just because of what it would do to Ma, either. It hurt because I’d always thought Pa was the most decent guy in the world. Dis-appointment was a big ache all through me. Pa was rotten—he was rotten! I stopped pacing when I heard Ma’s voice outside the door. "Ken, are you in there?"

I took a big, deep breath. "Yeah, Ma, I’m here."

I went out on a limb and have a glass of milk with me, I thought you were with Pa all this time. Then I saw your bike propped up against the front porch. I hate being alone so much, and Pa probably was somewhere till late tonight.

No, he won’t be back until late. I thought, bitterly, not until he and his girl friend are finished out there in the cottage.

I got sick to my stomach all at once, but I gritted my teeth and walked over to the door and opened it. Ma was standing there in that old black-and-white checked dress she was always wearing. Ma was white as a sheet.

"You look pale, Ken," she said, putting her hand up on my face. "You aren’t sick, are you?"

"No," I said, pulling away. "No, I’m okay. If you wouldn’t look at her, I was sure what had happened would never in my face."

THEN I heard the back door open and close, and I knew Pa had left the house. I clenched my fists at my sides to fight down the feeling of wanting to yell at the top of my lungs what I thought of him for what he’d done to Ma.

I watched her walk down the stairs and toward the kitchen, and then I heard her voice, soft and sympathetic—"Oh, Sam, you’re so terribly tired—your
poor face, the lines in it. Now you go right to bed. I'll set you a nice glass of hot milk."

I went back into my room. I couldn't stand to look at him. When Pa came down the next morning, I was just finished breakfast. Ma looked real peaked, and Pa grabbed her shoulders gently and pleaded, "Please, Anna, go back to bed. I'll fix my own breakfast." It made me sick. Pa didn't care about her—he was just trying to ease his conscience. I couldn't take it. I brushed past them and went out to do the chores.

That night at supper, though, I tried to act normal about things. When Pa said he was going up to Lake Eden to finish the cottage roof, I just about gagged on the mouthful of potatoes I was trying to force down. I shoved my chair back and stood up.

"Why, Ken," Ma said, "what's wrong? You are sick! Sam, just look at that boy, how pale he is, and he hasn't eaten a thing!"

"I'm just not hungry," I told her. I was halfway out the back door when I heard Pa saying behind me, "Something wrong, son? Something go wrong at the dance last night?"

I swung around and stared at him. My throat and chest felt funny and tight, and I could hardly breathe. It was the first time I'd felt him right in the face since that awful thing had happened.

"I didn't go to the dance," I said hoarsely. "Joanie got sick, and I didn't go!"

He looked surprised. Then Ma said, "Ken went up to the lake to give you a hand at the cottage."

She took a sip from the cup of hot soup in front of her. It was a special kind of beef broth that Doc said was supposed to drink to build up her strength. "But you weren't around," she went on, "so he came back home."

Pa's and my eyes met then, and from the shocked, stunned look on his face I knew he'd guessed what I'd seen up there at Lake Eden. His face turned a strange gray color. "Oh," he said slowly, "then right now."

He stopped and swallowed hard. "Well, I—" I went on over to Bill Small's to pick up some more naps. You must've come while I was at Bill's."

"Yeah," I said, glancing at Ma. I couldn't help but notice how thin her fingers were on the cup she was holding and how thin and narrow her shoulders looked, sort of bunched over in the old checked dress. All at once the terrible hurt about Pa just seemed to turn into a horrible feeling of disgust for him.

I hurried on out the door. I heard Pa's chair scrape on the floor as he stood up, but I didn't wait for him. I didn't want to talk to him. What was there for us to talk about? Could he explain away what had happened last night?

I hiked the two miles into town and called Joanie from the drugstore. I figured I'd feel better if I could just see her, talk to her. I guess that's the way it is when things go wrong for you, it helps just being with that somebody.

But Joanie laughed when I told her I wanted to come over and see her. "Are you kidding, Ken Harwood?" she said. "Have you forgotten I've got the measles!"

"Oh, heck, Joanie," I told her. "I'm not afraid of any old measles. I already had them, when I was about seven years old. Please, Joanie, let me come over and talk to you—just for a minute."

"Oh, no," she said in a shocked voice. "I'd never let you see me like this—all these awful splatters on my face. Why, I look like a—a boiled lobster!" Then she began to giggle again. "I'd never let you see me like this again—especially with Ma and Anna."

So I hung up finally. But, gosh, I sure ached to be with her. It just seemed like my whole world had fallen apart all at once. I didn't see Pa when I got home that night. But the next afternoon when I got to the barn to do the milking, he was there waiting for me. We just stood there, staring at each other, and I didn't say a word. "Ken, I went over to see Reverend Gates today—I guess you know why. I needed help."

"I didn't say anything.

"I feel rotten about this, son," he went on after a minute. "That's why I went to see Reverend Gates. I just didn't know what to do."

"What is there to do?" I burst out in a crazy-sounding voice. "What is there to do? You can't take it back—what you did to—Ma and Anna."

I TOOK out a cigarette and lit it, and I could see how his hand was shaking. Ordinarily he'd never have lit a cigarette in the barn. Honest to Pete, I almost felt sorry for him. Almost, but not quite, not when I thought again about the woman in the pink playsuit.

"Listen to me, Ken," he said. "I know I can't ask you to forget about what's happened. I know it'll never be the same..."

No, never the same. I thought numbly. It'll never be the same.

"I told Reverend Gates everything," he went on. "He was on the phone how sorry he was. Reverend Gates told me to pray. He told me God would forgive me if I prayed. And, Ken, I prayed so hard—"

His voice gave in a funny way, and he gulped.

"Son, can't you see how—how rotten I feel about this? It was one of those crazy things. Your ma's been sick for so long. I was so afraid it happened—"

He stopped short, and his face turned brick red. I knew what he was trying to say—that Ma'd been too sick to be a wife to him. So he'd gone out to find that sort of thing somewhere else.

"I was weak—" He put his hand up to his forehead in a sort of desperate way. "I was lonely, and then Meg came hanging around the cottage while I was working. Her brother runs the bait stand there at the lake. She started to drop over during the evening. We talked, and I was so tired, so empty without your ma and—"

I sat down on a bale of hay and put my hands over my face. I wished he wouldn't talk about it. It made me rotten too, just hearing how it had been with the two of them, sneaking around behind Ma's back.

Then I felt Pa's big hand on my shoulder. "I love your ma more than anyone in the world," he said. "I wanted to go right to her, tell her everything and beg her to forgive me. I wanted to get right down on my knees and beg her to give me another chance. After all, I had Reverend Gates—I knew I shouldn't."

"Why?" I said, "Why?"

"Because it would hurt your ma too much," he lifted his head up high and his eyes burned. "You think I'm getting out of it easy, don't you?"
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said, "You think I’ve had my flight and now I can go back to your ma and not tell her a thing, and everything will be like it was before. But I can’t do that, Ken. I’m not getting out of it easy. It’d be a lot easier for me if I could go right to your ma, tell her, get it off my chest, but this way I’ve got to carry my guilt with me—" His voice broke again.

Just for a second I was torn all apart by my feelings. One part of me wanted to comfort Pa, he looked so beat. But the other part of me, I knew I shouldn’t be comforting him, making things easy for him. He’s the one who did this terrible thing. He should suffer for it, shouldn’t he?

"What do you want me to do?" I said coldly.

"I want you to help me, son," he said slowly. "I—I want you to keep my secret."

Well, I guess I knew right then and there that what Pa was saying was the truth. It would nearly kill Ma if he told her about that other woman. And I guess Pa wouldn’t have gone to Reverend Gates if he wasn’t really sorry about the whole thing.

"I won’t say anything," I said, not looking at him. It made me feel sick, having to be a part of the thing they’d done, but I didn’t see any other way out.

His big hand squeezed my shoulder. "Thanks, son," he said. And then he turned around and walked out of the barn.

So I figured, well, that was probably the end of the whole thing. Things settled down pretty much into the old routine again, except that I didn’t spend as much time at home as I used to. I’d hurry home and do my chores around the farm, and then I’d ride my bike back into town. I hated being in the same house with Pa, having to act as though nothing had happened. I’d go out with Betsy, sharing that ugly secret with him.

It was easier to hang around Phillips’s Drugstore with some of the gang from school, drinking cokes and playing the jukebox. Not that I went much for those other kids. There were about a half dozen or so of them.

This one senior, Burt Scott, was sort of the ringleader. I’d never liked him much. He was one of those big-mouthed, smart-aleck types. He was always taking us guys aside and telling us about his experiences with this or that girl, how he’d spent a night at the Sunset Motel out on Route 3 with one of them or parked out at the Point on Lake Eden with another. You know the type. But at least kidding around with all of them at Phillips’s, I could forget for a while about Pa.

Sure I missed Joanie, though. Oh, I talked to her every day on the phone, but I ached to hold her in my arms, especially now with my whole world gone sort of haywire. It wasn’t just a matter of any girl, either. It had to be Joanie.

There were several others I could have gone out with—like this one girl, Betsy Grant. She was in my class at school, one of those pretty little blond-doll types, if you know what I mean. She’d been hinting around for a while about a date. She’d slide onto the stool beside me while I was having a soda and say something like, "Poor Kenny—he misses his Joanie so much! I bet he could make him feel better, though."

And when I’d look around at her, she’d smile, an impish sort of grin. There’s going to be a swell big weiner roast up at Ridgeway Park," she’d say, putting her hand on my arm, "Come on, Kenny—why don’t you come on along?"

Well, she wasn’t fooling me any. I mean, I knew she was like that with all the guys. I’d heard the talk around school about her. At least half the guys in the senior class had been in the old lover’s lane at the Point with her at some time or other.

Sure I could have gone out with Betsy. I could have had almost anything I wanted from her. But it was Joanie I wanted. Joanie I needed.

Pa didn’t go up to Lake Eden any more. He was finished with the house and cottage roof. He got a pretty good-sized check out of it, too. It was like Christmas around our place. A lot of the bills were paid off, and Pa bought Ma a pretty new flowered house dress and some stockings and a little bottle of perfume.

He bought me something, too—the rifle I’d been wanting for ages. But somehow I couldn’t feel very happy about it. It almost seemed like a bribe to me, to keep my mouth shut about what I’d seen out there at Lake Eden.

Oh, I kept telling myself I shouldn’t feel like that. Pa’d turned to God for forgiveness, and God had forgiven him, so why shouldn’t I? But it didn’t seem like a minute went by that I didn’t feel that terrible ache of disappointment and hatred and a nagging little feeling of resentment, too. I didn’t want it to be like that, but I just couldn’t help it.

Then this one night it seemed like I just couldn’t stand it any longer. I’d gone up to Ridgeway with the gang, after all. They were having a big barn dance up there, and Betsy had tried to coax me to come along. Now I kept telling myself that at least if I went up there, I wouldn’t have had to think. I could just be a part of the gang, laughing and kidding and having a good time.

Finally I got up and slipped down to the kitchen to get a glass of milk. Then I remembered the bottle Pa had hidden up there on the top shelf of the cupboard, and I figured a good swallow of that would make me feel better.

I reached up and found it behind the jars of tomatoes. When I saw how dusty it was, I knew Pa must have quit drinking. I didn’t know whether to laugh or cry about that. I couldn’t help but think bitterly that he sure wasn’t suffering much these days for the terrible thing he’d done.

In fact, you’d never even know to look at him that he was sorry at all about the whole thing, that he even had a conscience. If he ever thought about the other girl at all, there were any signs of it. He’d gone back to his usual gruff, tight-lipped self. He never mentioned the whole mess again to me, even when we were alone.

I dropped the bottle, turned, and felt the stuff burn my throat. In a minute I began to feel warm all through me. By the time I put the bottle back on the shelf, it was practically empty. Everything was getting a little blurred around me. I started back toward my room, but walked smack into somebody standing in the kitchen doorway.

It was Pa. He reached out and grabbed my arm. "You’re drunk!" he (Continued on page 42)
Style No. 507—DRAMA OF THE YEAR! A superbly molded modified sheath of fine rayon novovare. Shown on your figure to subtle perfection. Slim and sleek, with a dashing wide collar and button closing adding dramatic back interest. Red, black, grey, royal blue.

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NAME
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THE other half of the wide bed was empty. My reaching hand lay there for a moment before I remembered. It was a habit I couldn’t seem to forget—reaching out for Steve when something wakened me in the middle of the night. Steve and I had been divorced for almost three years, yet I still did it. There was still that heart-sick, empty feeling inside me when I came fully awake and remembered.

The telephone was ringing. The clock on the nightstand said two a.m. I picked up the phone and murmured drowsily into it.

In my ear, Steve’s voice said, “Joyce—Joy honey, is that you?”

He'd been drinking—I could tell that. He didn’t belong to me any more—he’d been married for almost three years to somebody else. When I divorced him, I told him and myself and a lot of other people that I hated him, but that wasn’t true—not then, not now. I hadn’t found anyone to take Steve’s place in those three empty, lonely years, and I had a feeling I was never going to.

Now, with the sound of his voice in my ear, the surge of longing within me told me nothing else mattered except that he was here, back in the town where we’d been married and had lived together in this house.

He was at the bus station. He said he wanted to see me, talk to me. I knew something must be terribly wrong. Otherwise he wouldn’t have come back. Whatever it was, it didn’t matter.

“It’s all right, Steve,” I said. “Come—I’ll be waiting.”

I slipped into a robe, pinned back my hair, and went running down the stairs to start coffee in the percolator. When I heard the car in the driveway, I think my heart really stopped for a minute. I don’t remember running across the room to open the door, but the thrill of emotion when I saw Steve standing there looking at me was like a sharp, deep pain.

He looked terrible. It was raining, and his clothes and his hair were soaked. He’d been drinking—he was almost out on his legs. He stood looking at me for a minute, (Continued on page 44).

How nicely little Matt and Tina play together, I thought happily, glad that we’d decided to keep Matt with us.

And then I heard my little daughter’s terrified screams for help.

Then Asked Me to Raise Their Child

Steve tried to comfort me. “Maybe the doctor’s wrong about the baby, Joyce. We’ll take him to others—to specialists!”
Sobs rose in my throat as I looked at my infant son.

What could he have to look forward to, with a mother living on charity and a father in jail?

It was nearly midnight when they came. Pepe and I were watching a late movie on television. There were three of them—two in uniform, one in a suit. They came into our small room, crowding it with their bulky bodies. “Stand up, Rivera,” one of them said.

Pepe stood up slowly, a dazed look spreading across his face. I shrank against the door, frightened.

“What do you want?” Pepe said hoarsely.

“Raise your hands, Rivera.”

Pepe lifted his hands above his head.

One of them stepped up to him and began to run his hands along Pepe’s body. “He’s clean,” he grunted.

Pepe lowered his hands slowly, his look of bewilderment giving way to anger. “What do you want with us?” he said heatedly. “Why do you bust in at this hour?”

“Hold out your hands,” one of them said.

(Continued on page 18)
Pepe stared at him defiantly. Meanwhile the one in plain clothes had started to search through our bureau.

"Let me see your hands," the policeman repeated.

Pepe put both hands in front of him unwillingly. I stared in dumb horror at the click of the handcuffs making me smile. "Why are you here?" I cried desperately. "Please—won't someone tell us?"

The cops stared at me with closed faces. The man in plain clothes continued his search, peering into the oven, opening the refrigerator, lifting the paper drapes. Pepe and I looked at each other, frightened. Pepe's face was a sickly yellow.

"Don't ask me your name—I'm a detective." The soft voice of the man in plain clothes startled me. It didn't match the face like leather, the thick white hair.

"No, I'm not a guy named Brigstock?" Donovan said.

Pepe thought for a moment, then shook his head.

"He lives at the hotel where you work." "Many people live there. I work in the kitchen, I do not know them." Pepe's voice shook.

"Brigstock knows you," Donovan said softly. "He was robbed and mugged early this evening. Where were you at six-thirty?"

Pepe looked dazed. He thought for a moment. "I was on the subway."

"And then?" Pepe went on.

"What time did you get home?"

"He got here at the usual time," I said raggedly. "Seven o'clock."

The detective frowned at me. "Brigstock never came home at six-thirty, that you pretended to be from room service, that he opened the door, you pushed your way in and beat him, and took his watch and money."

"He is crazy!" Pepe said sickly.

"Brigstock said he recognized you right away. He's seen you hanging around the service entrance, smoking."

"We all go here for a cigarette," Pepe said numbly. "I do nothing wrong."

"Tell that to the judge." Donovan nodded to the policeman who placed themselves on either side of Pepe.

"No, I'm not guilty," Pepe stiffened, his eyes wild. "I am innocent!" he cried. "You cannot arrest an innocent man!"

One of the policemen shoved him toward me. He stumbled and slowly righted himself. Then he whirled, raising his handcuffed wrists above his head. "I will not go!" he cried. "I am innocent!"

One of the cops lunged at him. I heard the thud of his fist against Pepe's face. I covered my mouth, feeling sick. Pepe was swaying. Blood trickled from his mouth. The swaying began again. Pepe staggered, his knees buckling.

I went a little crazy then. Screaming and weeping, I flung myself at the cop. "Leave him alone!" I moaned. "He is not guilty!"

Donovan grabbed my wrists. "Take it easy," he said softly. "Your man resisted arrest. He wouldn't have been hurt otherwise. That's a serious charge—resisting arrest. We won't enter it unless we have more trouble with him."

I tried to break loose, my eyes blinded by tears.

"Take him away," Donovan said softly. "I understand they led Pepe out. Then I collapsed in a chair and covered my face. "You can see him tomorrow," Donovan added. A moment later I heard the door close after them. It was a long time before I could stop crying. Still in a state of shock, I stared dully around the room. Clothes hung crazily out of the bureau drawers. The paper drapes were hanging crooked. I got up to straighten them.

Suddenly my hands on the drapes from above. I was doing. I wondered sickly. I sat down, shaking violently. I could not stop. Familiar sounds drifted up to me from the street—soft laughter, the babble of voices, an occasional truck rumbling by. How could I fit in with Pepe in jail, I wondered numbly.

I felt a flutter inside of me. The baby stirred. I looked down at my swollen stomach. The tears filled my eyes. Our child would be born soon. I thought of all our dreams for him, how hard we'd worked to get to America, to make a decent life.

"Yes, shut my eyes, remembering San Miguel, the night of the fiesta for our patron saint.

The village was gay with the music of the marimba band. People laughed, forgetting the hunger in their stomach. The paper lanterns strung across the streets cast a strange enchanting glow over our sleepy village.

I was in the middle of the crowd, a shy fifteen-year-old. Pepe separated himself from the group of giggling boys and asked me to dance. My throat too thick to answer, I nodded, drifting into his arms as if in a dream. We danced for both of us, and later, hand in hand, we walked away from the village to the palm grove. The moon was a crescent casting a soft light over us. My heart thrilled with excitement when Pepe kissed me on the forehead and let me go.

"You have grown up, Carmen," he said thoughtfully. I couldn't help giggling. "It isn't such a discovery, Pepe. Everyone but you has noticed."

Pepe's grin made my heart dissolve. His slender face, so handsome in the moonlight, swept me with a strange excitement. We looked at each other for a long moment. "Oh, Carmen," he sighed, "come here." I drifted into his arms with a glad cry. And when we kissed, I knew it was the beginning of love.

Later, it was a hopeless love, and often in the years that followed, I wept. Pepe would not marry until we could get to the States. "There is no life here, Carmen, no hope. I want something better for you."

In my heart I disagreed, but I wanted so to be Pepe's wife! Our families were poor, and there were many of us—too many and too little food. The men worked in the sugar fields—Pepe, too. I did laundry for the women of the field. And I wished I could get it. We saved every cent we could for the fare to the States, but the dream seemed far away and impossible.

Pepe had gone to school for a couple of years. He could read and write. He had taught me to read and write, too. We studied English together, the strange words making our tongues clumsy.

It took us five years to save enough for the trip. We were married in the village church, and a week later, with much crying and kissing, we said good-by to our families and departed for San Juan, where we got the first boat to New York.

New York—such a beautiful, magic city when you see it from the plane, its lights twinkling like all the stars in the sky, so different on the ground, with its ceaseless roaring noise and the confusion and the cold.

We arrived in mid-December. My cousin Ramon met us at the airport. Without a word, we hugged him and answered all the questions he asked about San Miguel and our family and friends. We were shivering when he led us to the bus to Manhattan. All the way into the city, I kept questioning him, and it was hard not to interrupt with questions of our own.

In Manhattan we followed Cousin Ramon down into the subway. I clung tight to his hand, terrified of the thunder of the trains, the swarms of people who pushed and shoved. We got off in Spanish Harlem. That was where Cousin Ramon lived. My heart sank as we walked through the crowded streets. Was it possible there were such slums in America? Pepe and I looked at each other sadly.

But the warmth of Cousin Ramon's apartment, the cheeriness, and the gladness which with Maria, his wife, threw her arms around us made us forget the dirty streets. While their four solemn-faced children watched, Ramon said their names. "Larry, Betty, Louis, and Barbara." He grinned. "They are American names." The children looked healthy and well fed. With pride Maria showed them through the apartment. It was clean and comfortable. She opened the shiny refrigerator and showed us how easy it was to cook on the gas stove.

That dinner Pepe asked Cousin Ramon all the things we were dying to know. Jobs were easy to get, Cousin Ramon said. He was head bus boy in a fine restaurant. He would take Pepe on and let him work from there. Besides, we feel happier among our own people."

I felt troubled. This was not what Pepe had come of. I looked at Pepe. His face was sad. Then he shrugged. "It is nice inside, though. That is what matters."

That night Pepe and I slept on the kitchen floor. And even the bitter cold of the hard floor could not spoil our happiness.

(Continued on page 51)
GOOD grooming is essential to today's woman. Whether she's about to embark on a new job, date a boy, or meet some new people, she'll make her best impression if she's looking her best. Check yourself with these questions on good grooming. If you can answer yes to fifteen or more, you're undoubtedly a well-groomed girl!

1. Are your lines definite? This includes a straight hair-parting, eyebrows tweezed free of straggling hairs, brushed to a smooth line, and accented with a subtle touch of eyebrow pencil, mouth etched sharply with a pencil-slim lipstick or a lipstick brush, underwear and girdle that hug the figure without any bulges or wrinkles.

2. Have you lady's fingers? Correct untidy cuticles by pushing them back with your towel every time you wash your hands and also by massaging them occasionally with cuticle oil. The effects of smoking can be hidden with nicotine stain remover or a cut lemon rubbed over the stains. No nail polish at all is better than the chipped remains of an old manicure. Nail-white pencils or double-strength peroxide will remove under-nail stains.

3. Is your complexion clear? Cleanse the oil track beside each nostril with extra care, and follow your soaping and creaming with an astringent. Keep all your laughter lines free of blackheads, and pay particular attention to your temples and hairline where tiny pimples tend to form from dust irritation.

4. Are your undergarments under control? Of course, you don't allow your slip to show below your hemline, but what about the straps? Sew little tabs on the inside of your dress and blouse shoulders with a snap or hook (Continued on page 61)
I was sitting on top of the world. On our very first date Billy had taken me home to meet his folks. How was I to know that that was only Billy's slick way of getting a girl to let her guard down?

"Oh, GO soak your head, Mom!" I shrieked. "Can't you ever leave me alone? Do you have to yak, yak, yak all the time? If I want to go with Billy Clark, what difference does it make to you? You and your Danny Paxton—you've crammed him down my throat until I hate the sight of him! What's so great about him, anyway? He's just a drip, and you know it. He's poorer than we are and doesn't even have a car. Same date—sitting in this crummy house wearing holey cushions. No, thank you—I'm going out with Billy, and that's that!"

"Now just a minute, Linda," Mom said, furiou.

"You'd better be careful how you talk to me, or you won't be going out with anybody! I'm getting fed up with your insolence—after all, you're only sixteen, and you still have to do a few things I say!"

"Big deal!" I retorted. "I'm terrified! Honestly, Mom, you're going to push me too far someday. You don't know what I'd give to leave this house forever just so I could get away from your constant nagging."

"Oh, Linda," Mom answered, "it's impossible to (Continued on page 32)"

HE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF ME

Could I Make Him Marry Me?

Compelling Novelette
My husband had asked someone home for supper—nothing unusual in that. Yet here I was, watching the minutes tick off, knowing that the moment this guest entered our doorway, my marriage would blow sky-high.

"You'll do," he said. I wanted to slap that grin off his face, but in the spot I was in, I just couldn't.

But just remembering that former name, Bonnie Walters, brought back ugly pictures of the past, and I squirmed there in the stuffy choir loft and tried to shut out the thoughts that came crowding in.

Bonnie Walters—that name had been plastered over the marquees of cheap night clubs and burlesque houses up and down the West Coast. "See Bonnie, Sensational Strip-Teaser," the newspaper ads had read, and men had poured into the clubs and theaters and devoured me with their eyes and shouted coarse demands as I paraded before them in a scanty costume and with a frozen, painted smile on my face.

Sitting there in the choir loft, I felt deathly sick to my stomach, as I always did when the past shoved itself into my mind. Dear God, what wouldn't I give to undo those five terrible years? I'd been broke, friendless, a kid of sixteen who'd been kicked around so much by a drunken

(Continued on page 57)
I stiffened at Brad's touch, but I tried to still my panic. After all, we were married now.

What was I going to do? The very day we'd married, my husband had changed to a man I couldn't possibly love!

- IT WAS very late when Brad, my new husband, pulled up in front of a motel. "We'd better get off the road, or we'll never make an early start in the morning," he said. "And we've got to be in New Mexico by Sunday." He seemed to be nervous and very tired, too.

I cringed inwardly for just a moment, remembering Mom's certainty that all men were beasts—and inconsiderate of women. But this was Brad. I'd loved him for years!

So a few minutes later I undressed in the small bathroom, hurrying because it was late, poking because I was aware of every taut muscle in my body, screaming tired.

Then I opened the door, and Brad stood there, big and powerful looking. I flushed when his eyes went over me in my sheer gown and robe. His

(Continued on page 26)
voice tried to tease, I knew, but there was an impatience on his face, too, when he said, "I was getting ready to knock the door down, woman."

My effort, though, was sabotaged, because he grinned, that slow, sort of shy smile, and put his arms around me. He kissed me tenderly, then I felt him tremble as his kiss grew more urgent.

"I should be going," he promised, and I shivered a little as I walked toward the strange bed.

I concentrated on the memories of desire Brad's petting had always aroused in me, and found them hard to resist. Brad set the new travel alarm clock, smiled down at me with a strange look in his eyes, and then snapped off the lamp. I felt shy, exhausted, and strangely wistful being so close to Brad. But I was a little eager, too. We'd waited so long for this night.

He turned, reached for me, and I staggered back. But I did not have the will to still my panic. After all, Brad was my husband now. I wanted to plead, "Be gentle," But this was the man I loved, and there was no need to plead—certainly not now.

But when his mouth took mine in a hurting manner and his hands were harsh and bold, I stiffened again. He didn't see to sense my panic. There was a kind of madness in him, in my injured pride, my shame at being used—all were lost on him in his impatience. I couldn't believe it!

For without any love-making, any build-up, he made me his wife and then turned on his side and slept. I lay there, rigid, shocked, and he didn't even realize it.

How could he claim to love me and treat me so? Mom had been right—men thought only of themselves. Anyway, Brad thought only of himself. I almost hated him.

But the daylight streaked our room. I pulled myself on my elbow and stared down at his relaxed features. He looked like a tired young kid. I remembered all the things we'd done together through our courtship, and I cried. I cried that night. I cried the night he returned to camp after basic training and begged me to wait for him if I couldn't come to camp and marry him. He wanted us to be married so soon. He thought that it was because he loved me as I loved him, because he couldn't bear being separated. Now I knew he'd just desired me—nothing more! He'd been impatient, I supposed. After all, I couldn't have had him otherwise.

I'd wanted him so much before our wedding. Nights when he'd kiss me, caress me, I'd feel deep desire sweep over me. But I didn't want him now! I'd never have desired him like this.

As though he heard my thoughts, he stirred. I slid out of bed, shut off the alarm before it rang, and hurried into the bathroom to dress.

When I came back, Brad was dressed, and he smiled at me as he rubbed his eyes and stretched. "I'm beat," he said.

"What a honeymoon this is—so darned rushed."

We reached New Mexico by Sunday, but I was in a state of numb shock by then. The long hours of driving and short hours of sleeping were telling on each of us. Brad seemed something was bothering him, but I didn't try to make him understand. You just don't beg a man to love you gently!

If he just took his husband's rights for granted, nothing I could say would change him. I decided. He found a motel room in New Mexico and immediately called his buddy who had promised to get him a union card on a big job if he could start by Monday.

When he began to snore telephoning, I was standing in the middle of the small room, filled with despair. "I'm going over to talk to Ed Harvey now, Judy. He just told me his boss agreed to start me out if I'd had three years' apprenticeship as a plumber. Plumbing takes less time to learn than welding, and I'll be on the same job as Ed," Brad said. "I'll break. And the starting pay will be good."

I just stared at him, feeling shut out, alone. "Are we going to live in this one room?" I asked.

He just grunted, grinning, "Of course not. We'll find an apartment soon." He washed hurriedly and combed his hair. "I'll hurry, Judy," And he pulled a bill out of his wallet and handed it to me, saying, "But you eat now. There's a luncheon a couple of doors down from the office out front."

When he left, I felt forsaken, then angry when my chin started to tremble. His eyes seemed to have been brilliant with excitement when he'd kissed me good-by. Why did he to show me the setup. It's big, he added, cracking his knuckles nervously. He says I'll catch on, but I'm not sure.

He paced the floor, filling the small room with his movements. He stood there, though really remembering me at last, he asked, "Did you get something to eat?"

I hadn't. I wasn't hungry. But I nodded.

"Ed and I ate downtown. I knew shop talk would bore you," he said. And then that look changed the color of his eyes, and I knew that he had forgotten the job offer. "It's a long story. He turned my face to the wall and was glad there were no more tears inside me.

When I woke up the next morning, Brad had left for work. I noticed he left his bill on the night table for me. I climbed out of bed and looked around the small, cluttered room, ugly in the bright light filtering through the shades at the windows. Suddenly I burst into futile tears.

How could Brad be so different? Could a girl go with a fellow so long and not realize that he didn't love her the way she loved him? I sat on the one chair in the room and dried my eyes. Tears were so useless!

Just the same they started anew as I remembered the first time he'd brought me flowers, that beautiful bunch of white roses from high school and had taken me to his senior prom. He'd been so bashful, shy looking, as he'd filled the door frame with his bigness, offering me the bunch of flowers. "Don't like it, Miss?" he'd asked as I opened them. "Mrs. Bright at the greenhouse said they were."

I'd smiled up into his eyes. "Brad, they're beautiful."

He'd grinned sheepishly. "A guy never knows how dumb he is until he tries to figure out what his girl would like. I asked my old man, but he didn't know, because he'd never given a woman flowers."

"They're just perfect," I'd insisted, feeling a surge of pity, thinking of Brad and his father living alone for so many years since Brad's mother's death.

Later, when it came my turn to graduate and Brad took me to my senior prom, he brought my flowers confidently, sure of himself. He was right after all he'd been drafted and had spent sixteen months on duty in Germany.

I couldn't make him understand that there just wasn't time to marry during his first furlough after basic. He'd resented that more than I even realized, I now decided.

Brad had taught me so many things. He'd taught me to roller skate at our local rink, where he'd picked me off the floor, his face flushed, while I was learning. He'd taught me to swim in the river near our town and to dance. And when we were older, he'd taught me to come alive in his arms without going too far. We'd wait for marriage he'd said. But now—

Still, there were so many things in him I did love!

A last I got dressed and tried to hide my tears with make-up. I unpacked a few things and came upon the envelope. Mom had given me while she helped me dress for my wedding. I'd scooped at the idea when she took my hand and told me she wanted me to have enough money to come home if my marriage didn't work out. But now, clutching the

(Continued on page 40)
TREAT YOUR FAMILY TO A SPECIAL DINNER

by Frances Adams

Garlic Steak transforms a sirloin cut into a steak lover's dream!

- TIRED of serving the same old thing for dinner? Looking for some new and different ideas? Well, we think we’ve got just the recipes you’re searching for—a tempting assortment of delicious new dishes and exciting variations on popular old standbys, all guaranteed to surprise and delight your family!

(Continued on page 62)

Sunday dinner supreme — Baked Glazed Ham, topped with maraschino cherries, and Baked Peas and Lemon.

National Canned Pea Council

If you want to do something different with spaghetti, try tempting Spaghetti with Lamb Balls and Sauce.

American Sheep Producers Council

A brand-new taste treat for dinner tonight—Fruit-Stuffed Pork Chops!

Kellogg's All-Bran

Make plenty of Marjoram Braised Chicken—your family is sure to want second helpings!

American Spice Trade Association
We were just a couple of happy-go-lucky kids in love when we started out on that hike.

But after the shocking thing we saw that day, neither of us would ever be the same.

"Come on, Ellie," Ted said excitedly. "Don't be afraid. I had to laugh. How could I be afraid of anything with Ted beside me?"

WHEN Ted and I got off the bus and started out on our hike that summer day, we were a couple of kids. Oh, not carefree kids exactly—we thought we had a problem. But we were never again to be quite so young as we were that July morning.

Ted Burke was eighteen years old. I, Ellie Lyman, was sixteen—and that was the rub. Too young to marry without my mother's permission, and she wouldn't give it. She said I had to go back to high school next year and graduate before I married. And there was another rub, too—money.

You see, Ted and I were a dance team—and a good one, too. We'd met three years before on an amateur program and had teamed up. This summer we had landed our first real engagement at the beach casino, but the money wasn't much. If someday we could just get enough money to strike out for New York or California, we felt that we'd land something good. But it was a long way from our Southern town to either New York or California, and neither Ted's father nor mother had any spare money. Ted had just finished high school that June, and this was his first job as well as mine.

We were talking about it that morning as we wandered through the farm country that reminded me of my old home, which I still missed sometimes.

"Don't worry, kid," Ted said softly. "A year isn't so long. At least that's what the old folks say. And this winter I'll get a job teaching at one of the dance studios, and I'll save every cent. When you graduate, we'll get married and take off."

I squeezed his hand and tried to pretend to be as optimistic as he was pretending to be. Actually, we both knew that even if he did land (Continued on page 30)
the job he wanted, the chances were slim that he'd save enough to get to
New York, much less Hollywood. Oh, I wished fervently, if only we'd get one of
those breaks you hear of people getting and not very often, to wash down a thousand dollars into our laps!
Some people believe that if you wish a thing hard enough, you'll get it. If
that's so, you ought to be mighty careful
you and I ought. Judging by my experience that morning.
We had taken a path that led behind
one of the farms into an almost tropical
wilderness. We had been heading to-
ward through thick woods somewhere
back there. But this particular
section was almost impassable, and we
were about to turn back when Ted
caught a path that seemed to begin on
the farther side of some clearing. Let's get
if we can't get in there a way," he said
excitedly. "Come on, Ellie—don't be
afraid."
I had to laugh. How could I be
afraid of anything with Ted beside me?
We picked our way gingerly through
shrubs and weeds. My legs were getting
badly scratched, but Ted was so intent
on reaching the path that I hated to
suggest turning back. Then I stumbled over
the huge trunk of a fallen tree.
Ted picked me up, apologizing,
laughing, kissing me, until for us the wild-
erness was merely another triumph of
the tree, intent only on each other
for some time. As I looked at Ted lov-
ingly, the same old thought came to me
—oh, if only there were nothing to stop us
turning me on! Then my eyes wandered the
direction in which we had been traveling.
Before us a very small tract of the wilderness was not wilderness at all.
There were about thirty-five plants
cautiously nurtured, the most ready for
harvesting—plants that I recognized.
"Ted," I cried unbelievably. "Look!"
He followed my glance. "Why, some-
body's planted something out here in
this wilderness. I wonder why and why it
is."
"I know what it is," I gasped. "It's
marijuana!"
Ted exclaimed. "Silly! You've been read-
ing too many detective stories. And how
would you recognize marijuana, any-
how?"
"Because I've seen it before," I cried.
"Well, let me tell you. You know
I told you a thousand times that be-
fore Dad died, we lived on a little farm.
Well, there was part of our land that wasn't
cultivated, and it merged with some
cultivated land belonging to our
next-door neighbor, Mr. Barnes.
One day Dad went out there for the first
time in years to see what the chances
were of doing anything with his unused
bit of land. He wandered to his neighbor's part by mistake. He found
a marijuana patch about this size. Dad
eknew every plant that ever grew, and
he recognized it right away.
"What did he do about it?" Ted asked.
"Well, at first he was going right to
the police. Then he got to thinking about
that neighbor of ours. He and his wife
had been good neighbors when Mom
was alive, and he knew we'd do a lot for us. So
Dad decided to give the man a chance.
He went over there, told him he knew
what he was up to and what he thought of
all this. He said it wouldn't ruin people's lives. He said if Mr.
Barnes would come out with him right
then and burn the marijuana down, he
wouldn't tell. But I guess Mr. Barnes
didn't know Dad very well. He said
that crop was worth fifteen to twenty
thousand dollars, that he'd give Dad
five thousand of the take if he'd keep
his mouth shut.
"Five thousand!" Ted gasped. "What
did your father do?"
"Well, Dad had a temper, and he tore
out of there fighting mad and called the
police. He said nobody could bribe him
to be a party to a crime like that. I was
there when the police burned down
the stuff after they arrested Mr. Barnes.
And I know exactly what it looked like.
That's marijuana, Ted.
"Well," Ted replied excitedly, "it's our
turn to call the police. Come on, we'll
get back and map out the road for them.
Gosh, who'd have thought we'd run into
an adventure like this!"
"I ought to have been as industrious as Ted did. For the first time I was thinking of
that five thousand Dad had turned down.
What I could have done with it today!
I tried to push the thought aside, but
I couldn't.
If we hadn't wasted time walking
around those narcotic plants and ex-
amining them, we'd have gone back and
phoned the police and probably gotten
our names on the paper, and that would
have been the end of it. As it was, we
wasted perhaps another twenty minutes.
The plants were almost ready for har-
esting. I told Ted that I had told him
about marijuana, and then we stopped
for a few more kisses. And as we were
finally coming out of the jungle-like sec-
tion, I happened before us. A big
brawny man with his hat pulled
down over his eyes.
He was as startled as we were, but
he spoke first. "Lose, kids?" he asked.
"No," I answered.
Ted said, "We were just exploring.
"Find anything?" the man demanded.
I nodded Ted, but he was never the
cautious type. "We sure did," he cried.
"Our nurseries. We're on our way to
report it."
"I wouldn't be in too big a hurry
to do that," the man said quietly. "You
might get in trouble, you know. I know
the man who owns this land, and I've
an idea he might be willing to make
you kids a nice present if you just keep
quiet."
"You own it yourself," I blurted.
"Smart little girl, aren't you? Okay,
mis. I own it. Not the land, but the
crop. A fellow's got to earn a living
somehow, you know. In five or six days
the crop is ready. I'm the man who owns it, and
there'll be a thousand dollars in it for
you if you keep your mouths shut good and
tight.
Ted cried, "Why, you no-good—What
do you take us for? We're going to the
police right now."
Now the man looked ugly, and I was
scared of what he might do if Ted
carried out that threat. I like to
think that Ted only did it to make me do what I did. But I know better
than that. I was scared, but I was
thinking of the money, too.
A thousand, the man had said. We
couldn't get out of that with a thousand. Two
thousand would mean our whole future.
I wouldn't really have to finish high
school. Ted and I could easily elope to
New York on two thousand dollars!
It made my face feel hot in my memory. Oh, Dad had ideals, but
he couldn't afford them. He was satisfied
with his little farm. He didn't really need money. As for me, well, I knew I
couldn't get by on the buying dope. But
suppose the crop was burned and the
man went to prison? What then? He'd
get out pretty soon and plant a new
crop. We could do the ped-
dling just by reporting this one man and
destroying his marijuana plants. And,
anyway, marijuana wasn't as deadly as
dope.
I smiled at him lovingly as I drew
Ted aside for a conference. Ted was
shocked and furious at first at my sug-
gestion. Then gradually he started
to listen.
With Ted darling, we'll be stuck
down here forever if we don't get a break
like this—I know we will! This is our
big chance, and we owe it to ourselves to
grab it. Ted, we can't reform the world by going on this,
and that man might kill us if we even
tried. Let's take the money while we
can get it. Maybe—maybe something
will happen to the crop, anyhow.
I didn't want and didn't love him.
Maybe he wasn't quite as strong as
he should have been.
We faced the man together a little
later. We'll keep quiet for two
thousand dollars, not for one thousand,"
I told him crisply. "And we don't wait
for harvest day.
"I might make it two thousand, but
you'll wait for harvest day, all right.
Otherwise how will you know you won't take my money and squeal?"
We reached an agreement at last. I
knew the marijuana couldn't possibly
be harvested before three days, more
likely four. We planned it. We met every
morning after the third day and look at
it. The day it was cut, we would be
paid off.
We went through the next few days
and nights in a trance. Even our dance-
ing didn't quite wake us up. We contin-
ued to spend our daylight hours together,
but we had little to say to each other.
When we passed a policeman, I saw Ted
stand rigid, put on his tightest jump suit,
and struggle that was going on inside of him. Had
I weakened, he'd have been happy. But
he never suggested backing out of our
contract. And as for me, my conscience
was hurting, but I silenced it and con-
centrated on the picture of Ted and me
as a big-time dance team.
We made three trips to the mari-
juana crop before harvest day. On
that morning we were up early, and the first
day was there, with another man. They
had come in a truck which was almost
hidden by trees and undergrowth on an
degraded road in the direction of the
creek. The men were already at
work, cutting the stalks and piling them.

The man we talked to before held
(Continued on page 50)
IT WAS a rather grim Muriel who sat in her bedroom, pondering the disillusionment of her previous date. It had been an all-too-familiar story. The boy simply didn’t want to keep his hands in place and wasn’t too happy over keeping their evening a pleasant affair.

Must I always have trouble with straying hands, she wondered. Am I the only one this happens to, and if I’m not, how do the other girls handle it?

The problem was obviously a difficult one. Muriel would do well to adopt a few methods used by Mary.

In the first place, Mary accepts the fact that many of her dates might be inclined to be free with their hands, that it isn’t always easy to tell the aggressive from the timid. For this reason she is always certain to take a few precautions.

Before each date Mary makes certain the evening is properly planned to avoid such a crisis. What kind of date is it to be? Where will they go? How many other couples will be along?

Double dating at a dance, a prearranged evening at the theater or movies, or a party to be held at the home of a known and trusted friend, are all ideal. Definitely out are such evasive replies as, ‘Aw, I don’t know—but we’ll find something to do!’

After she learns where, when, and with whom, she sets a time limit when she must be home and tells her date beforehand. This limit will allow sufficient time for entertainment, plus half an hour for a late snack, and a reasonable time to drive home, but it will preclude any possibility of a heavy necking party or too many idle moments.

(Continued on page 43)
He Took Advantage of Me (Continued from page 20)

make you happy. I give you everything I can, and I try to be patient, but you'd _better_ phrase it that way or you're going to be more than a little anybody's a little farmer's wife, and I only had a question of green fingers and a lot of them.

But the thing is, I could remember not so long ago when I'd had everything I wanted. Probably I was spoiled, like Mom kept telling me. But I'm sure, when Grandma had died, I had thought things had been different for me. After my grandfather died, Granny had married a man with money. She had been very generous with me and with my three older brothers—but especially with me. Since I was the only girl and my dad was her only child, she went wild over me.

Mom let her spoil me, too—in fact, I think Mom encouraged it. Granny took me to town several times a month and completely outfitted me in the best clothes she could buy. I got pretty smug about it, being a little girl with clothes. I was never even better at the same time, though, than I was with my friends. Well, all the good things in my life ended when Granny passed away suddenly when I was thirteen. It came as quite a shock to me that the pretty dresses and the dainty slippers of my past were no longer with me, any more than Granny was.
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CHAPTER II

WE WERE still dancing when Mrs. Clark came back about an hour later with a tray of sandwiches, cookies, and coles. Again she asked the baby to excuse himself for a moment. When he came back, he had a bottle of whisky hidden in his sweater. "Oh, no, Billy," I whispered as he poured a generous shot, "he never had a drink in my life, and, golly, right here in the Clarks’ house—why—why, I just couldn’t!"

Billy shoved my glass at me and said, "Drink it. It’s beautiful. Don’t make old Billy think he’s out with a drip. Come on, doll, don’t be chicken."

"But what if your mother finds out?"

I quavered.

She won’t. She wouldn’t believe it if she saw us pouring it in our glasses. She’s kind of dumb where I’m concerned. Now come on—be a good sport, huh!"

Reluctantly I raised my glass, and after the first few swallows of the fiery mixture I rather enjoyed it. A warm, glowing feeling was spreading from my throat clear to the tips of my toes, and alive and suddenly very, very daring, and very, very sure of myself with Billy.

We danced some more and had several more drinks from the bottle. It wasn’t long before I was pretty silly, giggling and snuggling up to Billy. Something kept stirring in the back of my mind, some little voice that told me to behave myself. Actually, up until then I had been a good girl in spite of the way I treated Mom. Now I couldn’t seem to care that I was acting cheap.

"Let’s leave now—shall we?" His voice sounded dreamy, sleepy, different. Billy looked different, too. He was more handsome than he had ever been. His black hair was sort of tumbled on his forehead, and his big blue eyes were just dreamily looking. He bent over and kissed me, and I just about flipped. I could feel the muscles in his strong arms as they tensed around me, and I craned against him, and yearned surged through me.

Slowly Billy moved away from me. "Shall we go?" he whispered huskily.

I barely remember that we paused briefly before we started again. It was just as we were getting pretty close to the edge of that long row of houses that ran down the street. I was all ready to fall into his arms, visualizing myself living in that beautiful house with Billy and his parents.

Well, I guess I was sexual, all right—I was Billy’s conquest for that night. Only, how could I know that then? How could I know that Mom had been right about Billy? How could I know that the loss of the greens had cost me something? I had cheap affairs with into his home, that it was a subtle method he used to gain a girl’s confidence? And, most of all, how could I know that his poor mother, blind with love for Billy, had never suspected the truth about Billy?

I guess I didn’t know much of anything as I sat cuddled close beside Billy after we left his house. We stopped at a drive-in, where Billy ordered cokes into which he poured whisky from a bottle he had in the car.

The next move, of course, was to park someplace where we would be undisturbed. We had a wonderful secret hiding place, off the main highway only a few feet, but completely surrounded by trees. And it was then that Billy made me his confession in our secret place. But I’ll have to confess I didn’t struggle very hard.

I went into Billy’s arms willingly when he cut off the motor. His kisses were wonderful at first—but then I tired to stop him at first—I didn’t even want to. Then suddenly I realized I was letting Billy go too far, and that’s when I discovered I felt powerless to stop him. I struggled briefly, but the drinks I’d had dulled my reflexes, and I was no match for Billy.

Besides, Billy’s sweet whispered words cast a spell over me. “Darling, beautiful, sweet Billy, everything is so lovely? How could I have wasted so much time? Oh, you’re the greatest. Billy will do wonderful things for you—you’ll always be happy. Please, baby, oh yes, please, oh, Billy..."

“Oh, Billy, Billy, I love you. I love you,” I murmured, unable to fight him any more.

I was terribly, terribly sorry when I awakened next morning with a terrible taste in my mouth, a throbbing headache, and a frightfully guilty conscience.

Mom flounced into my room about ten o’clock and screamed, “You can just get up off your lazy back now, young lady. Just because it’s Saturday and you were out half the night with that sneaky Billy. I don’t know where you work doesn’t go on around here. You get up and clean up this room. It’s a disgrace—can’t you ever put your clothes away?”

I just lay there looking at her. I was feeling glibly and sick at heart, and I wished she’d go away. “Get up, I said!” she screamed, pulling the covers off me.

For once I didn’t say anything. I just crawled wearily out of bed. Mom looked like she’d been smacked. Well, if she expected a fight, she was going to be disappointed, I thought as I went into the bathroom to wash my face. I just didn’t have it in me to holster back at her that morning.

It wasn’t a good day. I was too quiet, and that made Mom suspicious. She kept asking me where I had been the night before. I mopped around the house listlessly, doing what she told me to and feeling more and more depressed.

But toward late afternoon I began to feel better—Billy called and asked for another date that night. Well, I thought, looking over at Mom defiantly, maybe it won’t be long before I can get away from here. Maybe we’ll just let this dump and go live at the Clarks. They have a maid—I won’t even have to pick up after myself. Smugly I told Mom I was going out with Billy again that night. Dad didn’t say anything. I don’t know what it is about that boy, but I’m afraid for you.”

“Big deal,” I smirked, and without another word I got ready for my date. More than anything else, I thought of the weeks that followed when I was out with Billy so often. She was worried, I could tell, and I knew she had good reason to be. Dad had a fit when he
came home from his trip and found I was going with Billy, but I told him how nice Billy was being, how he took me over to his parents' house every night. What really clinched the whole deal, though, was when the Clarks waylaid my folks in church and told them how happy they were that Billy was going with me and how much they enjoyed having me over.

Billy and I dated three or four nights a week. I knew he was still seeing Cynthia, but when I hesitantly mentioned it, he assured me he was trying to let her down easy. What could I do but believe him?

I was beginning to have my first doubts, though, beginning to wonder how much Mom might be right about Billy's reputation. I found out for myself that Billy was spoiled and surly and could be bitingly cruel if he didn't get his own way.

The second date we had, Billy drove to what I later referred to as "our special place." I tried to be strong. I wasn't going to let him make love to me again. He was very nasty, though. He didn't try to use the sweet words of the night before—he just took it for granted that I'd give in.

Our argument was brief. He thrust me roughly from him and turned the key in the ignition. "All right, if that's the way it is," he snarled.

I was scared I might lose him. I stammered, "But—but, Billy, it's wrong—"

"Oh, baby," he grinned, "it's not wrong when two people love each other." And he turned toward me again and caught me to him.

Did I have any excuse for giving in to him night after night? I guess I didn't, but I kept convincing myself that he really loved me, even though the words had come so easily to him. And as the days went by, I never had a doubt but that when Billy finished school, he'd marry me. The only thing that made me the least bit uneasy was that sometimes when Billy was drinking, he was almost brutal in his love-making. Other times, though, he was like he had been the first time, and it was those times I lived for.

As the weeks went by, I thought more and more about how lucky it would be for me if I were to get pregnant. Then Billy would naturally go ahead and marry me right away, I told myself. I wouldn't have to wait. Funny, I never thought about a poor innocent baby living a life of shame because his parents had to get married. I just selfishly thought that a baby would bind me forever to the boy I loved.

I wasn't complaining so much about my life now. I felt my future was settled. I could put up with Mom and being half poor awhile longer, I decided. It never occurred to me to worry about the fact that Billy and I never discussed the future. I was content to just ride along, living and savoring each day.

For the most part Mom and I were getting along better now, too. She didn't pick at me quite as much as she used to. I knew Mom was worried about me when she stayed so quiet. Oh, sure, once in a while we still tangled, and after every bout I was more convinced than ever that I just had to get Billy to marry me and the sooner the better.

Billy and I were invited to a party one of my girl friends was having on Christmas Eve. I hadn't let myself worry because Billy hadn't taken me...
PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR THE NEW BABY

By Elizabeth Andrews

PATHETIC indeed is the child who feels that a new baby has taken his place in the family affection. No parent would willingly subject him to his misery. Moreover, in an effort to draw attention back to himself, a child may develop objectionable habits.

He may, for instance, cry—like the baby—over every little thing or refuse to do anything for himself. He may become rebellious and disobedient. He may even resort to running away because he feels he is no longer wanted. And he is almost certain to harbor a growing resentment against the intruder in what was once his happy home.

Yet the arrival of a new baby can bring great joy to its older brother or sister. It can awaken in him or her a new nobility, a desire to protect, to serve and to help the little one. Few things will pay higher dividends in family happiness and welfare than efforts exerted toward making your baby welcomed by your other child.

To accomplish this, efforts must begin two or three months before the baby comes. Changes in your household which will affect another child should be made so far ahead that they will not be associated in his or her mind with the baby. For example, little Sue's bed must be moved to make room for the crib. If she knows it is being done for Baby, she will naturally feel that he is being given preference. By moving it two or three months early—on some excuse having nothing to do with Baby—this distress will be avoided. If you plan to send her to a nursery school or to a neighbor's each morning so you will have time to care for Baby, this should be begun a couple of weeks in advance. Then Sue will not feel that she is being shoved aside for the newcomer.

She should, of course, be told in advance that a little sister or brother is coming to live with her, and every opportunity should be taken to arouse her interest in babies. But she should be made to understand how helpless Baby will be at first. Explain that you and she—always include her in what you say—will have to do everything for him and that it will be a long time before he will be able either to play or talk with her. This will help her to realize that the main pleasure to be got out of him is in serving him. It will also prepare her for the time and care which you must give him.

Let her do as much for him as her size permits—even if it's no more than washing the soap off his back, feet and legs when he has his bath, and shaking on the powder or putting on the oil. It will keep her from feeling left out. Let her hold him often, even if it's so tiny herself that you must keep your arms under hers to insure his safety.

Encourage her to feel superior and important, and stress the fact that you no longer give her the attention you give Baby only because she is such a big, clever girl that she doesn't need it any more. This is very important. A child often gets the impression, because of the fuss and affection lavished on the baby, that being one is somehow praiseworthy and that in growing up, he has made himself inferior. His reaction naturally is to become babyish.

Last—and perhaps most important of all—when Sue and the baby are together, make a point of directing demonstrations of affection toward her rather than him. Never pet him to any great extent when she is around to see. Remember that until his arrival all your affection was heaped upon her. It does not show a mean or jealous nature if she has heart aches, if she feels lonely and neglected when you direct it away from her toward this newcomer who takes up so much of your coveted time.

around in his crowd—I knew he wanted to be alone with me, as I did with him. He had seemed enthusiastic, though, when I mentioned the party, and I'd really gotten excited since this would be the first time I had a chance to show Billy off to any of my friends.

So when the doorbell rang that night, I ran to let Billy in. In his hand he held a package, beautifully wrapped. Thanks, goodness! I thought, that I'd taken my precious, small allowance for the past several weeks and bought him a billfold. I was sure he didn't need it, and I was also sure it wouldn't be quite good enough for him, but it was the best I could do.

I took my package from his hands, and with fingers that were all thumbs, I opened it. Mom and Dad were staring curiously, waiting to see what was in the package. I gasped in surprise, for wrapped in soft tissue paper was a slinky, sheer black nightgown and robe. I had never seen anything so beautiful. "Oh, Billy—oh, Billy," I cried, overcome with joy.

Then I noticed Mom and Dad. They were glaring disapprovingly. "Young girls don't accept gifts of clothes from men," Mom said quietly.

"Certainly not that kind of clothes," Dad said.

"Now, I was in for it with all of them. I guessed, because Billy's face was red, and he looked mad as hops. I tried to smile at Billy, but his face flushed a deeper, angrier red. "Oh, it's all right, Billy," I grinned weakly. "Mom and Dad don't mean anything. And, anyway—" I turned defiantly to my angry-faced parents—"Billy and I are just the same as engaged!"

Mom and Dad looked so surprised—it was really hilarious the way their faces changed. Both of them jumped to their feet and grinned all over themselves. Honestly! Dad stuck out his hand for Billy to shake, and Billy reluctantly pushed a limp paw forward, which Dad soon dropped. Dad's face looked a little puzzled suddenly. "Billy put up one hand and he looked more sullen and even angrier than he had before.

I grabbed my coat and dashed for the door. Mom and Dad began yelling as usual about what time we should be home and to be careful. I wasn't listening—I was just feeling plain scared of Billy. Of course, he was furious, but—but after what we had been to each other, weren't we engaged?

He jumped me the minute we were in the car. "What was that bit about us being engaged," he roared. "Who gave you that idea? Listen, if I were going to get engaged, it wouldn't be to a dame a guy can make out with as easy as I did with you. We're not engaged now or ever! Do you understand me?"

"But, Billy—" I stammered. "After what we did—well, naturally, I supposed—"

"That's where you were wrong!" he lashed out. "You asked for what you got, and if you're after marriage, too, you asked for it from the wrong guy! You've half stabbed me in the mouth and slapped me hard across the mouth.

I held back my sobs, too proud to cry or ask to be taken home. The rest of that evening was pure torture for me. Billy ignored me completely. All the other girls at the party got the full benefit of his charm that night, while
I sat, silently and alone, not joining in because of the horrible worry I had now. Jeepers, I had thought that when I gave myself to Billy, we'd always be together. I'd known it was wrong, but I'd been so sure he really loved me. Brother, was I a square! Oh, gosh—I'd been so wrong, so terribly wrong.

Billy took me home silently and suddenly. I tried to coax him into making love to me, but he wouldn't. He walked me up to my door without a word, and he didn't kiss me good night.

"Billy—oh, Billy," I moaned. "Please don't be mad at me. I didn't mean anything, and I do love you so.

He didn't say a word, just spun on his heel and started back for his car.

"Will you call me in the morning?" I begged. Still no answer. I went into the house feeling lost and frightened and too exhausted emotionally for tears.

CHAPTER III

After that I only saw Billy at church and school. If he had to speak to me, it was very briefly and curtly. He was seen more often with Cynthia, and was also going with a girl who had a bad reputation in school. I knew then I'd thrown myself away on a boy who couldn't have cared less about me. I was sick about Billy and the way he was treating me. My heart just ached, and it didn't make it any better for Mom to constantly give me the third degree about why Billy changed toward me.

Finally one day I cried out. "It was you and Dad! You and your old-fashioned ideas! You insulted him about the Christmas present—you embarrassed him! When will you learn to be still? You always act so dumb! I'm sick of you! I hate you! And I stoned away and flew into my room and flopped down on the bed and cried and cried.

She afterward, even though Mom told me a hundred times that if Billy had really cared for me, she and Dad couldn't possibly have done anything to change him, I convinced myself that Billy's changed because of all these faults.

When I look back on it, I wonder how Mom and Dad stood me during the months that followed. I know now something I didn't understand then—that love is very much, and when you love someone, you make allowances for him.

I was really more than impossible to live with after I discovered I was pregnant. I expected, asked myself, hadn't I even hoped it would happen? I wanted to go to Billy and tell him, but I knew in my heart that it wouldn't make any difference to him. He was simply in love at me and tell me to prove it was his.

I stumbled dazedly through the next weeks, secretly setting the buttons over on my skirts, living in misery, trying to hide the truth from Mom and knowing I couldn't hide it forever.

One morning I was so sick I couldn't eat my breakfast, and when Mom followed me into the bathroom and saw me being sick, My face was puffed, ever so little, but enough so you could tell. Yes, I had accidentally let my guard down, and now she knew.

She grasped my shoulders, and a terror came from her white lips, "Oh, Linda! Oh! No—no!" She just kept on moaning.

I got that peculiar feeling I so often had where I wanted to hold her and love her, while another one which was stronger and crueler made me want to hurt her. "Haven't you ever seen a pregnant woman before?" I snapped, forcing back my own pain and anguish.

"I knew that's what would happen! I knew you shouldn't be with that Billy Clark! Everybody knows what he's like. I knew it! I knew it! I told you so!" On and on she moaned and whined, and I stood staring at her, wanting again to comfort her and to be comforted, but not knowing how.

Finally I couldn't stand any more of her ravings, and I screamed, "And do you know why I'm like this? It's perfectly simple. You made my life such a misery. I wanted to get away from you. I wanted to get married, to have money, to be somebody. Don't you think I want things? Do you think I want to be chained forever living on cheap food, sitting on worn-out furniture, wearing bargain basement clothes? Well, I wanted something better for my life!"

Mom stared at me a moment, and then she said very quietly, "Your plan boomeranged, though, didn't it, Linda? Instead of being out of your so-called misery, you have only brought yourself more. You have to consider your illegitimate child now. There will be no clothes for you, no fun. You'll be saddled with a child who didn't get you what you wanted, after all.

"In a way I guess much of it is my fault. Your dad told me, when his mother was lavishing so many fine gifts on you, that we were spoiling you. But you were so lovely, so dainty, so perfect. I wanted my only girl, who seemed like a beautiful miracle to me, to have everything I had never had. It was wrong, Linda. Even if we had been wealthy, there should have been some limit to the giving. Between your grandmother and me, we gave you the idea that you were something special, someone better than others, and we ruined what could have been a lovely, gracious girl."

I stared at Mom speechlessly. She was right. My plan had boomeranged. I hadn't been mature enough to accomplish what I'd started out to do. Now I was really in a fix. I brushed past Mom and went to my room. I had to think, but I was glad that Mom knew the truth. I couldn't have carried my burden alone much longer. I knew Mom was hurt Mom was. What mother wouldn't feel the same? I could hear her crying in her room, and if my heart hadn't been so encased in stone, I'd have gone to her and comforted her and told her how sorry I was.

Finally in the afternoon I came out of my room, and Mom and I talked. We discussed everything in the world except my condition. When finally Dad came home, Mom, with her tear-didden eyes, said quietly, "Go to your room, Linda. I want to talk to your father alone."

Wearily I went to my room, I heard the soft murmur of their voices and then Dad's loud, belligerent, "I'll kill him! I'll kill that—"

"Al, Al!" Mom soothed. "Don't talk that way. We have to be calm. We have to decide what to do."

"No, by Heaven!" Dad thundered. "He did wrong, and he'll pay! I'll kill him!"
"Now, Al," Mom said firmly, "you stop that right now and listen to me. We'll have to go to the boy's father. He's a good man, and I think he'll take care of things. It's too late now to do anything else. The harm has already been done. We can't help Linda if you kill Billey. Eat some supper. Think about what's going to happen to N neh and Mrs. Clark. It's hard, I know. I've cried my eyes out today, but we have to do what's best for our girl. We have to stand by her through this— that's our duty as parents. Please now, Al, you will help Linda, won't you?"

"Yes—of course," Dad moaned. "I wouldn't even let one of my own kids down."

"It's all my fault, Al—I spoiled her," Mom sighed.

I lay dry-eyed, listening to them. What difference did it make what they did? How did they do it? My life was ruined. I've been born under an unlucky star, I told myself pityingly.

WELL, the Clarks were good people. They knew I'd been with Billey practically every night for weeks. When Mom and Dad told my story to Mr. Clark, he was as indignant as Dad had been with the town council. Mom and Dad. I was still lying on the bed where I had been wallowing in my misery. "Come here, Linda," Mom called.

I stumbled into the room where my parents and Billey's were, all of them as grim faced as though they were facing the electric chair momentarily. They asked me thousands of questions, and Billey and I were guessed at. I had done wrong, and now we must marry, must pay for our sin by giving our baby a name. It didn't occur to me how it was to be managed, but I didn't really care, because I suddenly realized I no longer wanted to marry Billey. I saw him now for what he was—a spoiled, egotistical brat. But then, I reflected, so was I! I felt lifeless, like all the emotions had been drained from my body, as though nothing really mattered any more. The faces of the four parents as they sat in the shabby living room decided. Billey's and my fate were to be blurs to me.

Several days later Billey and I were carted, like wayward children, to the church and married with no fanfare in a quiet, unannounced ceremony.

After the ceremony we silently left the church and climbed into Billey's car. We were to spend our wedding night at a nearby motel. I trembled with a fear I didn't understand as I silently followed Billey into our cabin and watched him lock the door behind us.

As he turned to me, he thrust my overnight bag at me and dashed frantically to the bed, where he threw down his bag and opened it. There was a bottle of whisky in his bag, and I stood speechless as I watched him swallow the fiery liquid. For the last time I realized this boy had married me already drunk—he must have been drinking for hours.

It seems frantic to me as I prepared for bed in the tiny bathroom that Billey and I hadn't spoken to each other except during the exchanging of our wedding vows—even the drive to the motel had been silent.

Standing quietly in the bathroom, clutching my robe to me, I began to shake with terror. I was afraid to open the door and face the stranger who was my husband. But a loud pounding on the door brought me around, and I opened it reluctantly.

By then Billey was very drunk. "My beautiful, round, pink bride," he smirked, then grabbed me and threw me to the bed. What happened then was a humiliation I'll never be able to forget.

Then he pulled off his pants and leaped on me. I was too muddled to think of resistance. He took another pull at his bottle and stood leering over me. "A dumb dame!"

Suddenly his face lightened. "Yeah, so dumb, stupid in every way—isn't that what the boys say?" He took another pull at the bottle, and the light-brown liquid trickled down his chin. He stood there glaring at me, not speaking, for what seemed like an eternity. Before the words came spouting forth again.

"You tramp! You rotten little tramp! Do you think you're worthy to be married to? To me. Billey Clark. I had plans for my life! He moaned, 'Did you know that I was planning to marry Cynthia Grownver?"'

I didn't move my head or my eyes—I couldn't look at the man. I didn't feel the least bit sorry for Billey. Why should he? He was in as much as I. But oh, how I wished now that I wasn't married to him! I wish I'd never seen him. I was too frightened, too scared to dread his wrath that came down on me.

Then his mouth opened again, and a torrent of terrible abuse came pouring out. He called me every name he could think of, and he began to hit me. I put my hand first with the palm of my hand across the face, then with his fist on the side of my head. Then all over my body his hard, drunken blows rained down. I felt powerless, helpless. I tried to move, to stand over me. A madam holding me helpless on the bed. Once he stopped to take another drink, and I tried to rise, but his other hand grasped my hair and held me tight.

When he finished the contents of the bottle, he hit it hard against the side of the night table and broke it. He watched the broken pieces clatter to the floor in fascination. Then, still holding the jagged top of the bottle, he began to slice at me as I cried out in pain and fear.

Terrified, I exerted all my strength and jerked desperately away from him. I guess my terror made me strong, because finally I lunged with such suddenness that Billey went off balance as I rolled off the bed on the other side. I was on my feet instantly, staring in horror at Billey. Dear God! He'd fallen forward on a large, dagger-shaped fragment that sliced into his chest, and he lay there, bleeding. I screamed—I remember that. I screamed and screamed.

LATER I realized I was in a hospital. Mom and Dad were there, their faces tense and drawn. "What—what happened?" I whispered, at the same time remembering the broken bottle, piercing his own life. The cuts on my body and the baby I had lost were perfect evidence that Billey had caused his own death.

Naturally the newspapers gave the story a lot of publicity. Now everyone knew that I had been four months pregnant on my wedding night. I saw my..."
parents change overnight into tense, miserable, heart sick old people. Of course, they were terribly hurt and ashamed.

I came home from the hospital still in a daze of shock and disbelief. Mom and Dad were good to me—too good to me, I guess. I lay awake night after night. I didn't think I'd ever sleep again.

I brooded for months. I didn't go back to school. I didn't see anybody. Mom left me alone—she didn't have the spirit to yell at me any more. I moped around the house and so hard to make her see with the housework. I didn't see her any more, and she didn't boss me any more. Now that it was too late, we seemed to have achieved our peace.

But I was too happy peace for either of us. If only it could have happened before I ruined everybody's lives! I had hurt my parents so, and I knew that because of me, Billy's parents would be hurt, too.

I kept on wallowing in self-pity, and I felt that the world had thrown a dirty trick at me.

Then one day, about six months after Billy's death, Mr. Clark came by the house. He looked years older, but his tired, kind eyes glowed with pity when he saw me. I knew I was too thin, that I looked troubled and years older than my age.

"Linda, would you do me a favor?" he asked.

"Yes, yes, of course," I whispered.

"Billy's mother is very ill. She had a heart attack several weeks after Billy's funeral and another last night. The doctor says she doesn't have long—She wants to see you. Do you think, in spite of the awful opinion you must have of our family, you could come and see her, give a dying mother her last wish?"

I wouldn't have thought of not going. Mrs. Clark had always been wonderful to me. She had tried to make the best of things until I was still in the hospital, but I'd told the nurses I didn't want to see her. I guess I was ashamed that I'd taken her son away from her in such a horrible way. She respected my wishes and left me alone, and now she was ill and wanted to see me.

When Mr. Clark ushered me into her room, I was appalled at the difference in his appearance. Her skin was parchment thin and drawn so tight over her bones she looked like a skeleton, lying in the vast bed. Her eyes were sunken deeply, and huge purple shadows encircled them. My mouth went out of focus, and I sat beside her bed and put my hand on her hot cheek. "Hello, Mrs. Clark—" I could say no more.

She had her withered hand over mine and sighed, and then in a dull monotone she began to talk, to tell me how she couldn't die without making her peace with me, without telling me how sorry she was that she'd given birth to such a monster as Billy, who'd done such terrible things to me.

On and on she talked, telling me of her hopes and dreams for her son, how she'd tried to make him into a man everyone could be proud of. And most of all she recriminated herself because she was a failure, because she had failed in the one big undertaking of her life—to raise her boy to be a man.

And as she talked, as she poured out her soul to me, I knelt there, spellbound, knowing that Billy hadn't been altogether to blame. Oh, I figured it never could have amounted to much, but hadn't I been the one who'd caused his final downfall? Maybe he'd have eventually straightened out—lots of spoiled boys did. If I hadn't been so eager to feather my own nest, wasn't it possible that Billy might have turned out all right?

I had to tell Mrs. Clark about my own part in this tragedy—I had to let this woman die in peace. And even though it was probably the hardest thing I'd ever done, I told her everything, just as I'd written it here, about how I treated Mom and about how I set my cap for Billy.

She cried, poor Mrs. Clark; but they were tears of relief, because now she could believe again; could tell herself that maybe Billy would have been all right if it hadn't been for me. She didn't seem angry with me, she wasn't that kind of woman—she just seemed terribly relieved that I had told her the truth.

When Mr. Clark took me home, he said, "You did a brave and wonderful thing back there, Linda. For several years I've hidden the truth about Billy from my wife. I got him out of some bad scraps without publicity—money can do anything," he said dryly, "except make a man out of a spoiled boy. I protected Billy, never let him face up to his misdeeds, for his sake, fearing a shock might kill him. I was wrong, too—it seems we were all wrong," he sighed.

"I know I was, Mr. Clark," I whispered, "but will you believe me when I tell you that I thought I really did love Billy? It wasn't only the money, al

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though I have to be honest and admit that it was important, too. But I'm wondering if I should have any other boy as much. I'm wondering if I would have loved Billy if he'd been poor. I'm very well-pleased, up my house, but may-be—maybe God will give me another chance, even though I don't deserve it.

For the first time I realized that God was with me, that He had always been with me, and I knew that I must release my own mother from her guilty pain as I had Mrs. Clark. She was thinking the things that had happened been the result of her spoiling me. Poor Mom—I'd given her a bad time. I had to try to make it up to her.

Her voice turned grave as she said what was, at least partly, a broken heart had frightened me into thinking about Mom. What would I do without her? What would I do without her? It was at that time I started to think about my mother and not so much about myself.

Well, Mom and I had a long talk. I told her I was sorry for everything I'd done. She was awfully sweet. She told me she was sorry she hadn't been able to control her tongue when she'd argued and that she hadn't had the backbone to make me mind her.

I envelope in trembling hands, I wasn't so sure...

Brad came home from work, tired and starved. We ate at the lunchroom near our motel, and then I asked him if we couldn't look around for an apartment.

"Tonight?" I'm bashed, Judy. Why can't you look tomorrow? Get a newspaper and run down the listed ones by bus. Okay? I'm ready for bed myself. I'd got to get set as a plumber—it's our future—and it's going to be rough." He looked so mixed up as he spoke that I felt a surge of tenderness swept over me.

Perhaps if I had tried to get close to him then—but I didn't.

Later I sat reading the newspaper, and he asked, "Aren't you going to bed, too?"

I reached up and tilted the lamp shade away from him. "Not just yet," I said. My voice sounding muffled behind the newspaper as I pretended to read.

He got up, picked me up in his arms and carried me back to it rather roughly. "Hey, this is our honeymoon," he said in a tight voice as impatiently he pawed at my clothing. "What kind of wife are you, preferring to read?"

"Stop it!" I demanded, helpless in his grasp.

His face went white, his lips firm. "What's wrong with you?"

Where was the Brad I'd fallen in love with, I wondered as I snapped. "There's nothing wrong with me!" His face flushed as he grabbed his clothes and stalked into the bathroom.

And it was like a dark thundercloud when he came out fully dressed and headed for the door. "Thanks for being so darned helpful. She snarled, slamming the door behind him.

I changed my dress, trembling with fury and heartache. And then I hurried to the lunchroom and put through a long-distance call to my mother. I would not put up with the monster that Brad had become, not another minute...

When there was no answer at Mom's, I bit my lip to hold back my tears and looked up the bus-depot number. When I called there, they told me there wouldn't be a bus leaving for home before early morning. I felt trapped.

But biting my lip to steady my teeth which threatened to start chattering, I decided I'd get another room. I'd move my things into it and refuse to see Brad again before I left for home. In the morning I'd call a cab to take me to the bus station, and I'd go home where I belonged, home to Mom and familiar things—and forget Brad.

The owner at the motel office gave me a startled glance when I asked for a room. And then, his eyes filled with amusement, he asked, "Sure you want one? Expensive when you'll probably make up before morning, anyway. Why not settle for a walk in, and later—later?"

"Will you rent me a room, or must I call a cab and find another motel?"

I interrupted sharply.

He shrugged and reached for a key. "It's across the compound from the one you have." He nodded. I turned, clutching the key. I saw his eyes fill with laughter.

It didn't take me long to sort our luggage and carry my suitcase across the compound. I just hoped too many tourists didn't know we were honeymooning, because thoughts of their snide remarks made my face flush.

I left a note for Brad. I wrote:

I'm leaving you. I never want to see you again, so don't come after me. I have my own money to get home on.

I pinned it to the pillow where he couldn't miss it. And this time I did not cry.

Later I heard our car and realized I
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• THE END
said in a cold voice. “Kenneth Harwood, you’re drunk!”

“I’m not drunk,” I mumbled.

But the whisky had sure gone to my head, all right. It felt funny and groggy and terribly sleepy. All I could think about was getting back to bed.

But Pa began to shake me. “I won’t have it!” he said still in that same cold voice. “You know how I feel about this sort of thing—”

I wanted to laugh at once. I thought about the bottle on the top shelf. I felt like saying, “You think I don’t know you yourself had a bottle hidden up there behind those cans of tomatoes?”

But I didn’t say anything like that. It’s pretty hard, to be a sudden hero to a suddenly hard shove toward the stairs. “And tomorrow after you’re sober up, we’ll talk this matter out!” I don’t think I ever heard him sound so mad.

That’s how I turned plenty, too. What right did he have, acting like this toward me, I thought foggy, after the way he’d come cajoling to me practically, begging me to help him. Not that he had committed some horrible crime, just because I was a little drunk! And after the terrible thing he’d done!

I swung around and faced him suddenly, and the cry surged up through me. I saw Ma come up behind him, her face pale.

“What’s wrong, Sam?” she said in a scared little voice.

“What’s wrong?” Pa fumed. “What’s wrong? This—this kid’s drunk, that’s what!”

“Oh, Ken, no!” Ma said.

PA REACHED over and put his arm around her. Something exploded in me then, when I saw his big square fingers on Ma’s shoulder. I thought about those same big fingers unfastening the halter on that young cow that first seemed to go crazy. The room reeled around me.

“Get your hands off her!” I yelled.

“Get your dirty hands off my ma!”

“Ken!” Ma said, shocked. “Ken, what’s wrong with you?”

“Ask him!” I croaked. “Ask him about the woman in—the Harris cottage!”

Pa took a step forward. “Ken,” he said hoarsely. “Ken, you’re drunk— you don’t know what you’re saying!”

“I’m not that drunk!” I blurted out. “I saw you and her—”

“The Harris cottage?” Ma said in a vague sort of voice. “A—a woman in the Harris cottage?” She looked up at Pa, her eyes questioning.

“Oh, Anna,” Pa said, grabbing her to him. “I didn’t mean—I didn’t mean to hurt you—”

I saw the blood drain right out of Ma’s face then, and her eyes rolled funny, and she just went limp. Pa picked her up in his arms and rocked her a little, like a baby. Then he lifted his head and looked at me, and I never saw such a terrible look of agony in anybody’s face.

I turned around and staggered out the door. I just walked and walked and walked. I tried not to let myself think about Ma’s face when the truth hit her. I tried not to think about that look of wide-eyed agony in Pa’s eyes when he stood there, holding Ma in his arms.

I’d done right, I told myself. I’d done right! Ma should know. He had no right betraying her like that, then going right along as if nothing had even happened! I was right in telling her! There was no forgiveness for what he’d done, none!

I didn’t even realize that I was walking along the highway until this car pulled up alongside of me. I don’t know where I was going. I kept shaking my head, trying to get the fuzziness of those drinks’ out of it, trying to shake off those awful pictures of Ma and Pa.

“Hey, fella, where you going in such a huff?” somebody said.

I looked around. It was Burt Scott. He was sitting in his old jalopy with a few other kids.

“Come on—jump in, man!” he said. “We just came from Ridgeway. What a time we had there, huh, kids?”

They all laughed.

“Come on, Ken, climb aboard,” one of them yelled.

I started to say no, but then I thought maybe the cool air hitting me in the face could snap me out of the muddle I was in. Maybe riding along with those other kids laughing and kidding would be better than letting those thoughts tear around in my head. So I climbed in the back seat.

The air did feel good. But then suddenly I realized Burt had pulled the car off the highway into the driveway of some old deserted farmhouse. I heard him say, “Come here, baby,” to the girl beside him in the front seat, and in the moonlight I saw him pulling the girl against him. I felt a sudden pang of longing for Joanie. Things wouldn’t be so bad if she were here, if I could just feel the warmth and sweet-

ness of her, her telling me she loved me.

“Well, lover boy?” That was the first thing I realized. That was the first thing that Betsy Grant was sitting beside me. She kind of laughed and reached over and took hold of my hand.

“What’s the matter, honey?” she said.

“Your Mother Must Never Know” (Continued from page 12)

Joan, U.S. Pat. Off

“Your Mother Must Never Know” (Continued from page 12)
big, wild, thrilling release from everything.

I almost made a terrible mistake then. I almost gave in to that driving hunger in me.

But it was when my hand touched the buttons on Betsy's blouse and felt them come undone that the picture of Pa and the woman in the cottage hit me. It was as if somebody had thrown cold water in my face.

"No, I didn't know Pa had done it. Because I was drunk and hurt and mad and all mixed up in my feelings, I was trying to let Betsy's Grant's exciting, easy-given kisses give me just a few minutes ease of some of my problems. Why, that must have been just the way it had been with Pa!"

I shoved the car door open and staggered out. Behind me, I heard Betsy's sardonic, mocking voice. "Well, well—Little Boy Harwood—you just better run straight home to Mama—"

Well, she didn't know it, but that's exactly where I was going. I was going to see if I could pick up the pieces a little, make up some for what I'd done. I was stone-cold sober now, and I could see so many things differently. I could see how Pa could make such a terrible mistake. Oh, it still wasn't right what he'd done, but he was human, wasn't he? He could make mistakes, too, just like I almost did back there with Betsy.

He was standing in the middle of the living room when I came in. His face had lost that terrible look of agony. There was only shock there now and hurt.

"Pa," I said, and I could hardly force my voice out, "Pa, I'm sorry—"

He glanced over at the bedroom door, a quick, despairing look, and I knew Ma was in there, heartbroken. "I've lost her, Ken," he said wearily. "She can't understand. Oh, I don't blame her. She's been hurt, so—so terribly hurt—"

I walked stiffly over to the bedroom and opened the door. Ma was lying with her face in the pillow, her shoulders moving a little, and I knew she was crying quietly to herself. At first she wouldn't even listen to me.

"No, no—" she was saying. "I don't want to hear about him and— and her. No, please, Ken, please—"

But I kept right on talking. I had to. I had to make her understand somehow what I knew now—that Pa probably die if that would erase what had happened that night in the Harris cottage.

I told her how he had gone to Rev. Evans Gates, how he'd come to me. I told her about the bottle on the top shelf in the kitchen. And I told her about tonight. I told her every thing.

After a few minutes she lifted her head from the pillow and looked at me. "Where—where is your pa?" she asked in a choked voice.

"Well, it's been almost a year now since that night. Ma loved Pa enough to forgive him his one terrible mistake. She won't ever forget, I guess—none of us will—but she's forgiven him. And now that Ma's well again, they seem as close as ever"

Once in a great while I see Ma looking at Pa with a strange, hurt look in her eyes, and I realize all over again that I haven't spared her that hurt. I didn't have to send her whole world crashing down around her. Maybe Pa betrayed Ma, but I'll never forget that I betrayed her, too.

THE END

When a Date Gets Hard to Handle

(Continued from page 31)

This doesn't mean that Mary is cold or doesn't believe in romance. It simply means that she takes certain precautions until she learns the intentions of that handsome fellow with the red sedan.

Once the car stops in front of her home, she is in safe surroundings. For fifteen hours a day she will chat with any guy—letting him know what a swell time she had and what a wonderful fellow she thinks he is. Always she is careful of two things: 1) To let him know that she enjoyed herself and is appreciative of his date 2) That she doesn't sit too long in the car, thus branding her own time limit as a subtle trick.

As she gets to know him better, a few kisses may be in order. Just as the first few dates are casual, happy, and airy, so are the kisses. Mary keeps them short, pleasant little tokens—not as teasers, but as an enticing sample of better things to come.

When she knows Fred a little better, perhaps she will invite him inside to the refrigerator, promising, of course, that her parents are home.

In order that he won't ask himself a purely masculine question, "Does she really like me, or is she just using me as an admission ticket because I have "come dough"? Mary makes use of those compliments men pretend to hate but secretly desire. Without overdoing it, she reminds him how much fun they have together, how nice he really is, and how he will probably be a successful man in his occupation some not-too-distant day.

So far it is easy. Eventually, if they continue to date, the red sedan is going to stop in a shaded lane. How then, when he has her in his strong arms, explain the reasons where they belong?

Now psychologists and sociologists both generally agree that limited petting is wholesome for dating couples. It is a natural outlet for pent-up emotions; it is the beginning of young love. So long as it is kept on a minor plane and is not indulged in for extended periods, it can have a beautiful effect upon the emotions.

Again Mary takes a prearranged step. She relaxes with her head against the seat, and whispers, "Darling, do you know why I love you so much? I like you because you are the only boy that I can trust. You have no idea how wonderful it makes a girl feel to know that the fellow she is with will stop when she asks him to stop. All girls aren't as lucky as I am!"

That usually does it. In a gentle, subtle way she has not only placed him on his honor, but she has made him feel that he is superior to all other males. She has dressed him in shining armor, and he will try to live up to the degree she has bestowed upon him.

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My Husband Left Me For Her

(Continued from page 15)

then he swayed and stumbled a little and put out his hand. “Joyce—Joy honey—”

“I can’t say anything—I couldn’t. I just went to him with my arms open and felt the weight of his big body collapse against me.

“I don’t know how I managed to get him to the couch. But I did. He dropped down on it, his eyes closed, and he mumbled something I couldn’t understand. He had caught one of my hands in his, and he went on holding it long after I knew he no longer needed it. He reached there on the floor beside the couch, cold, aching in every muscle, when the early sunlight began coming in the window and Steve woke up.

His face was pale and puffed with sleep, and he had a king-size hangover.

“I know what you need, Steve,” I said. “Just wait now. In the kitchen my fingers shook as I fixed him a pick-me-up. I tried to make my voice casual when I put the glass in his hand. “Morning after, remember?” I said. “Go on, drink it up.” He sat there holding it, looking at me. “Joyce—I’m sorry about this,” he said. “I shouldn’t have come here, bothered you—”

“I told you to come,” I said. “Don’t you remember?”

He shook his head. “All I remember is getting on that bus, knowing I couldn’t take another hour of being alone like that, needing holding.”

“Alone! I wondered if he realized the sudden, wild surge of hope that gave me, hope that once I’d been too proud to admit had never really died. Did it mean that he and Vicky weren’t together any more? That their marriage hadn’t worked out?”

I tried to keep my voice steady when I told him. It’s—it’s all right, Steve. If you need anything, if I can help—if you and Vicky—”

“Vicky’s dead,” he said shortly. His voice had a dull, hopeless sound—not grief, not despair. It sounded as if he just wasn’t feeling anything at all.

“Oh, Steve, I didn’t know,” I said.

“I’m—I’m sorry, so sorry—”

“It happened two months ago,” he said. “I didn’t know when the baby was born.”

I gasped. “The baby! Steve, you—you have a child?”

He’s two months old. He’s still in the hospital. He could keep him for a while because he was premature.” A bit- ter twist pulled at the corner of his mouth. “I haven’t even got enough money to get him out of there,” he said.

“Things will be different now, with me, Joyce.”

I’d heard that Steve had had it bad after he married Vicky and they moved to the big city three hundred miles away. Vicky had been a switchboard operator for the Driscoll Company, where Steve had been a salesman. Mr. Driscoll knew me and had always been nice to me. After the divorce I asked for a job as a secretary with the company, and I was working there now.

I knew Mr. Driscoll felt sorry for me and blamed Steve for what had happened. I knew, too, why Steve hadn’t been able to get a good job in the city—Mr. Driscoll wouldn’t give him a reference.

Now Steve told me more about it—how hard up they’d been for money, that there’d been trouble between him and Vicky almost from the start.

“When she—when we knew she was going to have a baby, she didn’t want it. She would do anything for the baby—almost killed her, but she didn’t lose the baby. She was sick the rest of the time, though, and the little guy came a lot too soon. That time she didn’t make it.”

I listened to him, sick with pity and remorse, thinking how different things might have been if I’d listened when Steve begged me not to divorce him, even after admitting the affair with Vicky. He had pleaded with me to forgive him, but I’d been hurt and angry and deeply humiliated. Three years of
loneliness had washed all that away and left only what I was feeling now—
the pity, the remorse, and the love.
Steve started to get up. "I shouldn't have
mentioned it to you, Joyce," he said wretchedly. "After the rotten deal
I gave you, you don't owe me anything."
"I love you, Steve," I said. "I never
got over loving you. And a lot of it was
my fault―I have found one another again
understand—and they don't need to be
told.
There was little Matt, our son. From the
beginning I thought of him like that as ours. All I feel for his mother
was a kind of muted pity.

Matt was a beautiful, big baby. He
more than made up the weight he needed
in the first few days. He is large and
so good and quiet. He was the heart of
Steve's and my love, a love that only
deepened when we found we were going
to have another child.
We sold the house in the hands of a
real-estate agent, bought a new dress, had my hair fixed,
and wired Steve that I was on my way.

Our remarriage, our visit to the hospi
tal, to get little Matt. Our first night
gether―these are memories still too
touched with emotion, too poignantly
sweet for me to describe. Only people
who have been lost and lonely and who
have found one another again would
understand—and they don't need to be
told.

There was little Matt, our son. From the
beginning I thought of him like that as ours. All I feel for his mother
was a kind of muted pity.

Matt was a beautiful, big baby. He
more than made up the weight he needed
in the first few days. He is large and
so good and quiet. He was the heart of
Steve's and my love, a love that only
deepened when we found we were going
to have another child.
And then one day when I'd been down
town shopping while my neighbor
sat with the children, I screamed
my name from a taxi which had stopped
for a light. I couldn't help the chill
that came over me when I saw who it was—Shirley Lewis, from our old home.
When I went up to the car she
opened the door and almost dragged me in
beside her.

"Joyce!" she shrieked. "Joyce. I can
hardly believe it's really you. Are you
living here now? Are you and Steve
really together again? Did you take him

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back after that awful woman? You can't imagine the talk back home after you ran away like that. What really hap-
pended with Steve and that girl? Did they break up? I bet they did! It's the kind of thing that never lasts.'

I listened to her babble, still feeling cold, wishing I hadn't run into her. I knew that any-thing didn't. Shirley could never understand what had happened between Steve and me—all she would do was bring the shadow of old unhap-
piness to our lives.

But when I made it embarrassingly plain that she expected an invitation to our home, I invited her for dinner that night. I had to prepare her for one thing, though. I told her, "We—we have two children, Shirley.""She stared at me. "Two! But it's only been—You mean, twins?"

"No," I said. "My baby was born over two months old when Steve and I re-
marrued. Vicky died when he was born." "Oh, Joyce!" Her mouth was a red
circle of dismay. "How awful for you! Her baby! You mean, you're going to
raise it?"

"Matt is our baby," I said. "We love him very much. We think we're very lucky people to have two such wonderful children."

But I could see what she thought of that. She said, "Well, I think it's wonder-
fu1 of you, Joyce. A lot of women just couldn't have. I couldn't."

She couldn't. She and Steve were home and while I was getting the children ready for bed. She cooed over Tina, the baby, but I could see how her interest and curiosity centered on little Matt. She couldn't be interested in anything other than her son. He was a bably type. He talked with his hands, too.

"He's a big and big, isn't he?" she said.

"How old did you say he was?"

I told her fourteen months. When I came back from putting the baby to bed, she said, "How is it you can sit in this stroller, trying to coax him to talk to her. Shirley's voice was shrill, and she always talked too loudly. I could see Matt was afraid of her.

"Can't he talk?" she asked me. "Can't he say anything at all?"

"Lots of children don't until they're past two, I said. "He understands when you speak softly."

Her eyes were bright and curious as she watched me lift him.

"Can't he do anything for himself? He seems so he sort of limp. Is he sick or
something?"

"He's fine," I said. "It's the end of the day. He's tired."

But when I put him on the floor for a moment, his grasp on my knee slipped, and he slid to the floor. It was all sense until I picked him up. I looked at Shirley, and she was staring.

"Can he walk? Can't he even stand by himself?" she said, "you said he was fourteen months old!"

"He is," I said. "And the doctor says he'll walk when he gets ready, not before."

That wasn't quite true. I hadn't had Matt to the doctor's for a checkup re-
cently, because he didn't seem to need it. He slept and ate well, his skin was moist and pink. He'd started teething without a bit of trouble.

Now, though I told myself it was fool-
0, I couldn't help feeling a little stab of anxiety as I picked him up and finish-
ed undressing him, conscious of Shirley's eyes on me every minute. Her talk had stirred up worry in me, the kind every mother knows. Was Matt really all right? Because he was undemanding and

DINNER was a little tense. Steve had never cared much for Shirley—she had been intimately associated with our troubles and her presence made us both self-conscious. I'd phoned him at the office and told him she was coming, and he tried to be pleasant to her, but I think all of us were relieved when it was over.

Steve offered to drive Shirley downtown to her hotel, but she said no, that she'd take a taxi. I walked with her to the door when it came, but she didn't leave right away.

She stood there, half whispering, "Joyce, if I were you, I'd be real sure about that baby before I really made up my mind to it. After all, what do you know about Vicky—her family or anything? I'll bet even Steve didn't know much. And there might be something—you never can tell—"

"I don't know what you mean, Shirley," I said.

"I mean something hereditary, some-
thing wrong. Joyce I hate to say so, but that baby doesn't look right to me. He's so big and not so much like anything. If I were you, I'd find out for sure before I made up my mind." There was no use telling her I didn't have the slightest idea about anything. She left in a babble of good-byes and promises to write.

When I went back to Steve, he asked, "What was she whispering about—dig-
ing for dirt about you or what?"

I tried to tell him it was nothing, but he'd heard the mention of Vicky's name. "She's got me a little worried about Matt," I said. "Steve, you don't think he— you don't think there's anything wrong with him, do you?"

"Wrong with him?" he hooted. "He's the biggest, healthiest kid for his age in the neighborhood."

"I know. That's why I haven't been taking him for checkups lately. But Shirley thinks he ought to be talking and walking by himself now."

"A kid been married twice and no kids of her own to show for it. She's the type that's always glooming up other people."

But he went in with me when I went to the office in the morning, and there was none sense in him. Little Matt lay flat on his back, the way he always slept. His hair lay in little rings on his forehead, his skin was pink and moist. He was a beautiful little boy—no one looking at him could doubt that. And Shirley was what Steve had always said she was—a troublemaker.

But just the same I phoned the baby doctor's office in and made an appointment to bring Matt in for a checkup.

The doctor was reassuring. He told me that the baby had done quite well at different levels. This boy is a little ahead of himself physically—a little overweight and large. If he's a little behind in learn-
 ing to talk, it doesn't mean anything. It's nothing to worry about. As for walking, his weight has something to do with that, I think. I'll give you a diet for him to bring it down a little. Bring
him back in two or three months—by
that time he’ll probably be running
his legs off and have a vocabulary that will
amaze you. Children who learn to talk
late often do.”

I went home feeling immeasurably re-
lieved. Afterward I wondered if perhaps
the doctor wanted me to feel that way
because he knew I had a new baby to
fear for and wasn’t ready to face what
he had probably already detected.

The three months were busy ones. I
was active and irascible in the first
week of the two children. Maybe it was that,
or maybe I just hadn’t wanted to see it—
the inescapable truth that Matt wasn’t
progressing.

At a year and a half he still couldn’t
talk. There were sounds he had learned
to make that meant different things—
food, a drink of water, a name he had for
his little sister that sounded like
“Gree.” I knew what he meant by them
because I used him to do it, but it wasn’t
real talking.

He could stand by himself—he could
even walk a little—but his steps were
stumbling and unsure. He fell often, and
when he did, he didn’t try to get up
again. He lay there and waited for
me to help him.

He was still sweet tempered, gentle,
easy to care for. His brown eyes still
followed me wherever I went, and he always had that smiling look
when he looked at me. He adored her.

But something was wrong—something
was terribly wrong—I knew it as
Steve and I finished the doctor exam
him that second time. He tried not to alarm
us when he talked to us afterward.

But he said, “Sometimes it happens
that completely normal parents have a
child marked down from birth as
being different from other children. Why
it happens, we don’t always know—an
accident of birth, some hereditary factor
—we just aren’t sure. But it happens.
From me so far, it looks like your
child is going to be one of those children.”

I stared at him. “You mean—you
mean, Matt is retarded—a retarded
child?”

He frowned. “I don’t like that word.
Matt will simply develop more slowly
than other children his age, on a lower
intellectual level, and, of course, there
is a very definite limit as to how far he
can go. But with love and care and un-
derstanding, he can develop into a good,
useful individual.”

“I won’t believe it!” I shouted. “I won’t! There must be something we
can do. We’ve got a little money saved—we were
going to buy a house—but we’ll spend
evvery penny of it to cure Matt—”

The doctor shook his head. “I’m sor-
ry, but there’s nothing to do but what
I’ve suggested—give the boy love.
Extra care and attention will make him feel secure and
loved. I won’t deny you’ll have certain
problems in raising a child such as this
one, but they shouldn’t be insurmount-
able ones. Of course, you have another
child. If you’re planning a larger fami-
ly, there is always the alternative of
institutional care. Sometimes—”

“No!” I said. “No—I could never do
that, never! The very thought of Matt
in some of the institutions shocked me
so that I didn’t want to talk about it
or even think about it.

The doctor understood. “Forget I
mentioned it,” he said. “Take him home
now. Don’t make yourself unhappy
brooding about it—he’ll feel it if you do,
and so will the other child. Just re-
member—this has happened to many
other people. There are tragedies far
ever.

We walked out of the doctor’s office
in a daze. Once outside, I burst into un-
controllable tears, clutching little Matt
tightly in my arms.

Steve tried to comfort me. “Maybe
the doctor’s wrong about the baby,
Joyce,” he said. “We’ll convince them
—other specialists—”

I nodded, forcing a smile. If it took
every penny of the money we’d saved
for a home, we’d spend it on getting
the best doctors for little Matt, give him
every possible chance there was to grow
into a normal little boy.

CHAPTER II

IN the next three or four years we
exhausted every possibility of medical
or psychiatric help—and used up most
of our extra money in doing it. The
diagnosis was always the same—Matt
would never be normal. He would have
to be taught slowly and carefully the
things that other children learn instinc-
tively—how to speak with any kind of
distinctiveness, how to walk, the use
and meaning of everyday things. He even
turned to be trained patiently and slowly
in the physical functions of his body,
long after such habits were well estab-
lished in normal children.

There was, as the doctor had told me,
a definite limit to what he could learn.
He would never speak quickly or clearly,
he’d always be vulnerable to in-
numerable dangers because he lacked
the instinct of self-protection. A psy-
chiatrist found for him, a nurse with special
training who came to us and worked
with him for a few hours a day, but it
didn’t seem to me there was much
close.

There were other problems, just as
the doctor had warned me. One of
the worst of them was the unasked-for ad-
vise, the people who told us, “He would
be better in an institution with other
children like himself. You’ll come to
that—you’ll see.”

We wouldn’t—Steve and I both knew
that. Matt’s condition in some ways
marred the perfect happiness of our
lives, but to leave him in an insti-
tution and to leave us in a house with some
other children was too much for us. We
loved little Matt warmly and devotedly,
and he loved us, his home, and his small
sister, whom he still called “Gree.”

Tom loved him, too. Small as she was,
she seemed to sense his helplessness
and dependence, and she was fiercely loyal
to him. He was still large for his age
and startlingly strong. When sometimes
brutally strong, because of his clumsiness,
she covered up for him if she could. Their devotion to
each other was touching. It made up for
a lot of other things, I thought—until
the day he broke his arm.

They were playing together in the
living room, and I was in the kitchen.
I heard Tina say, “Let go—you let go,
Matt.”

She was a willful little thing and used
to giving Matt orders. Usually he
obeyed her, but this time he didn’t. He
had been holding her hand, and when
she tried to pull away, he didn’t let go.
I came into the living room when I heard her scream of pain.

His hand was still gripping her arm,
his little arm that hung at such an odd
angle.

I wanted to scream, too, but I held it
back. I knew I mustn’t frighten him,
or the damage might be worse. He let

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vides a rich source of bone-building Vitamin
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successful in hospital tests building up
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me bend his fingers away and free her arm. Tears filled his eyes as he watched me cradle her arm in mine as I carried her across the room to telephone for the doctor. He knew his beloved Gree was hurt, but he realized that he had done it. He was still standing there, woebegone and lost looking when the doctor came.

It was a clean fracture, and it healed quickly, but I had to keep the children from physical contact with each other for a while, and it wasn’t easy. For the first time I realized the danger of Matt’s size and strength. I kept telling myself that later on it would be different when he had more training and was older.

But there was something else that kept coming into my mind. It came back every time I shut my eyes—the memory of something one of the neighbors had said to me. She had spoken very bluntly, “In the end you’ll find it’s better if you let him put away. Sometimes they get violent.”

There was no violence in Matt—they hadn’t been quarreling when Tina was hurt—but there was his terrible, terrible strength. It was something to watch, and to make me wonder how easily it might be used against you.

That was the beginning of the really difficult time. After that I don’t think I ever really had a moment free of deep uneasiness.

Time passed. Tina was five years old and ready for school. In the first months of our remarriage we had talked about having another one, but it was kept away—the memory of something one of the neighbors had said to me. She had spoken very bluntly, “In the end you’ll find it’s better if you let him put away. Sometimes they get violent.”

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In the peace and love of home Matt was a part of our life, only a little different from the rest of us, accepted and beloved. But now there were other forces to reckon with—the world outside of home and the people in it.

There would be kindness and understanding there, but there would be a cruel and uncaring hand, and worst of all, there would be fear. It had already reached in and touched us like a dirty hand. It had brought the beginning of heartbreak to a little girl of seven—our child, who had a right to expect a normal life, security, happiness.

After the children were in bed, we tried to face it together, as we had done other things, talk it out, find a solution. There was one—it had been there all along. We had never been willing to accept the fact, but every day, every hour, every minute of reading something new—now—but for the first time we talked about it, and I think each of us knew in our heart what that meant.

The future lay ahead, the long years in which the children would be growing up. Tina would live in the world of the normal, she would have friends who were like herself—or would she? So many people were to be informed our children like Matt, and because they knew so little, they were unfeeling, cruel—like the children at school.

Would this go on happening through the years? was this the childhood and adolescence? Would it perhaps affect her chances for a happy, stable life as an adult? When she was ready for marriage, would the fact that she had a brother who had mentally retarded make no difference?

There was love between the children now—Tina didn’t blame Matt for any of the things that had happened. But would it always be like that? Wasn’t the possibility there in time that she might grow to resent him? And if she did, how would I feel about it? What would I do?

They were long thoughts, reaching ahead into a future that was still far away, but they were things that had to be considered, because we both realized that one day, perhaps soon, the final decision was made.

But it was a decision neither of us could make—not yet, not right now. Neither of us could be the one to say that our beloved little son must go away from us into an institution. I think that Steve’s suffering was more bitter than mine—his sense of guilt and remorse went deeper.

"I thought this on you, Joy," he said, "on you and on him, too—all of us. It’s too much to expect you to go on with it when your own child—"

I laid my fingers against his lips. "Don’t speak. It’s both of our children, darling," I said. "And we’re too tired to talk any more now. We’ll leave it in God’s hands for tonight. Maybe tomorrow we’ll know what to do or the day after tomorrow.

And in the end it was a decision that was made for us.

A few days later Matt got away from me again. When a delivery man brought a package, I wasn’t at the front door because some money to pay him. Matt just slipped through the open door. It was only a few minutes until I missed him. I went out on the steps and into the back yard, looking for him. When I couldn’t find him, I realized what must have happened and that he must already be at the school, since he knew that I was running during the night, and there were little pools of water on the front steps. As I raked down them, I slipped and fell, and I felt the sharp, quick stab of pain in a twisted ankle.

A neighbor came out and helped me up. She was as much in tears as I was. She assured me that Matt’s care had always been most gloomy and depressing, and I didn’t want her to know what had happened.

When she told me I shouldn’t try to walk, I told her, "I have to go down the street a little way. I’ll take care of it when I come back later."

The roar of a passing fire engine drowned out my voice. Two others followed it with "Motorist, you’re headed toward the school. If there’s a fire in that old building, it must be the school—look at all those people running!"

People were pouring out of every apartment on the block, women most of them. The acrid smell of burning filled my nostrils. I tore away from the woman and broke into a hobbling run, not even feeling the pain of my twisted ankle.

There was a crowd already there when I reached it. Thick black smoke belched from the windows of the old schoolhouse. Firemen’s ladders were already up. They wouldn’t let me through, and I heard my voice screaming at them, "My children—they’re in there! My little boy—he won’t know what to do!"

But mine was only one of a hundred terror-filled voices, screaming, praying. Some of the children were coming out of the door. Some of them were at the

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**TOWEL TOWN, DEPT. S-17**

919 Princeton Road, Linden, N. J.
We Needed Money to Escape

(Continued from page 30)

out an envelope, his face grim. Ted's hands shook as he took it and counted the money. The man said, "You two stay here until we're ready to leave. Don't try anything now."

We wandered around uncomfortably, waiting for them to finish. In that hour the full import of what we'd done hit me. I thought of the dope racket and all its horrors. I longed now for a chance to tell the police, and the money no longer seemed important. But it was too late. If we tried to leave now, I had no doubt what those two criminals would do.

I could tell by a glance at Ted's white face that he was suffering, too. We held hands and said nothing at all to each other.

At last the men were through. "Come on, kids," one growled. "Help us carry this stuff to the truck. We're going to drop you a few miles from here."

Ted protested, "We can walk back to the bus, the way we came."

"Oh, no, you don't. We're taking no chances on your getting back before we're out of reach."

We were both scared as we carried the hateful plants to the truck. I noticed when Ted walked behind it that he studied the license number. I knew what was in his mind. He was going to report these men, try to help the law to catch them, turn the money in. And I was glad. It wouldn't make me stop hating myself and the firemen had helped.

They made us sit in the front of the truck, and the second man got in back. We drove a few miles down a road that wasn't really a road at all, and then suddenly the truck stopped. And that's all I remember, except for a sudden terrible pain in the head.

When I opened my eyes, I was face down in a clump of bushes. I could remember nothing at all, and then slowly it came back. The back of my head still ached dreadfully. I roused myself and called frantically, "Ted—where are you?"

There was no answer. There seemed to be something terribly wrong with my right leg, but I had no idea how to stop it. I hobbled along on the good one, and stumbled around. And then I found him—in another clump of bushes. Ted—so dreadfully stiff, lying face down, the back of his shirt stained with blood. I think I screamed some moments I can't account for, anyhow. But then I remember leaning over him, calling his name wildly. He was breathing—thank God he was breathing! I collected my scattered wits at last. My leg now hurt even worse than my head, and I realized I must have been thrown from the truck. But I managed to walk. I took the direction that seemed the most likely. They tell me I walked three miles to the nearest farmhouse. A woman was in the yard. I must have made sense, must have given her some idea where Ted was, before I passed out again.

The next thing I remember clearly, I was between white sheets in a white room at the farmhouse. The woman was sitting beside me, saying, "Now, Mr. Harrison, you can talk now," she said with a smile. "The doctor was here and gave you a shot. You'll sleep for a long time if you let yourself. Your boy friend's going to be all right. My husband and I can manage after him and took him to the hospital."

I don't remember anything after that until the next morning. My mother first, crying over me. Then the doctor. He told me I had a broken ankle, but that there was nothing serious, as he'd feared at first. Then the police.

I cried when I told the police the story, begged them not to blame Ted, because it was all my fault. I described the two men as best I could. They said Ted had regained consciousness and repeated the license number of the truck yesterday and that the police were searching for it. He'd also told them that their driver had hit me over the head first, and when Ted turned on him, the driver had apparent-
Hounded Night and Day (Continued from page 18)

Life wasn’t quite what we’d expected, but it was a whole lot better than San Miguel. Within a few days we both found jobs—Pepe in the kitchen of a hotel and I in a laundromat. At first we tried to find an apartment outside the slum. But we were just too nervous. Apartments were so few, and the people in charge often just looked at us defiantly and shook their heads. We finally found a place—a couple of blocks from Cousin Simon, in a dirty, run-down apartment house.

Our apartment was just one grime room, with part of it for the kitchen. The toilet was in the hallway, the noises from the street were always in our ears. Still, we made the best of it. We painted, we scrubbed, we bought linoleum for the floor. We shopped for furniture. We bought a couch, a bed, a vacuum cleaner, a table and chairs. Everything we got on credit—a little down, a little every week. Later we bought a television set, also on credit.

We bought the warmest clothing we could find to keep out the northern, icy winds. We spent hours in the five-and-ten-cent-store. We were like children there, buying everything that caught our fancy—bracelets and fake flowers for me, a wallet and a pipe for Pepe, glittering little vases for our room. We were trying to catch up on a world of things we were doing without.

A year passed. We made friends on the block, learned the subway system, discovered Coney Island and the zoo in Central Park. We developed a taste for hot dogs and pastrami. We learned English and an understanding of American slang. We were happy in the States with our stomachs full and the love between us always quickening our hearts until on the first of June we were married in a little Catholic church.

So happy that we closed our eyes to the undercurrent of violence on the street and the emphasis on the wages of sin.

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crowned streets, the frequent clashes between Puerto Ricans and the other races in our neighborhood, the names we were called. They didn’t like us, the unseen barrier that kept us apart from other Americans, and the Puerto Rican boys who turned savage and bitter, who lounged around the candy stores and got in trouble with the police. We turned our backs on such things, believing that hard work and a decent life would someday earn us the respect of our fellow Americans.

But the end of the first year I was expecting a baby. How wonderful it was to have a baby in the States! Instead of a village midwife with dirty hands and the smell of a ranch, there was a fine clinic and good doctors to watch over me, a nurse who told me what to eat to have a healthy baby. Pepe and I were overjoyed.

All went well. I felt fine and kept my job until I was too big to lift the laundry bundles. Pepe and I shopped for the baby. We bought a crib, pretty little clothes, blankets. My heart swelled with pride, I knew I would never wear rags, never know the gnawing pain of hunger, the hopelessness and futility of Island life. We decided on an American name like those of Cousin Ramon’s children—David for a boy, Dorothy for a girl.

And now what? I stared around the room, so empty without Pepe. The television was still on, blaring out a commercial. Then the whole world started watching together came back on. Was it less than an hour ago that we’d been sitting here in peace and happiness? All day like a lifetime, I got up and turned the set off. They couldn’t hold him, I kept telling myself desperately. But suppose they did? My throat thickened with terror. Suppose they did?

I closed my eyes that night. The next morning, feeling groggy and sick, I went to the prison to see Pepe. They told me I’d have to wait awhile, but as I walked toward a bench to sit down, I heard a little voice I’d never heard before from the next room, and I rushed in before anyone could stop me.

Pepe was sitting in a chair under a bright light, surrounded by policemen. He looked as though he were in pain, but my heart filled with pity for him as I rushed toward him. One of the policemen held me back as I pleaded, “He’s innocent—can’t you see he is innocent? Pepe, tell them,” I sobbed, “Tell them you didn’t do it!”

The policeman holding me motioned to another one to bring Pepe along, and then led me to an adjacent room, bare except for a long table and benches on either side. He helped me to one of the benches and told Pepe to sit at the one on the other side. Then he stationed himself behind the door and started watching us. I fought down my panic and tried to look encouraging. Pepe’s eyes looked frightened and shocked.

“Are you all right?” I whispered softly.

He nodded numbly. He glanced at the policeman, who was watching us. Then, reaching for my hands across the table, he said, “Tell them, tell them all the next time. Someone must have seen me, Carmen. Make them understand how important it is to remember. It is the only way I can help my men. Ask everyone—even the children. Do you understand?”

“I will see everyone,” I said earnestly. “I will—”

“Time’s up,” the policeman said apologetically. My heart sank. There was so much to say.

I nodded. My hands, forcing a sick smile. My heart turned over.

“Take care of yourself,” he said softly. I nodded unable to speak, my eyes burning as Pepe stood up and swallowed hard, knowing it would only add to Pepe’s misery. He went out with the policeman, and then the tears fell from my eyes, and I thought my heart would break.

A s soon as I got home. I went from apartment to apartment in the hope of finding a witness who could prove Pepe had gotten home before Big Robert became busy in her arms, her flock of little ones tugging at her skirt, shook her head and tried to comfort me with food. Softhearted Dolores wept, old Mrs. Perez muttered bitterly. The neighbors—Lupi, Inez, Mrs. Murano—shook their heads, too, and murmured about the sadness of life. None had seen Pepe enter the building.

Wringing tears, I pleaded with the neighbors, Mr. De Luca, the grocer, shrugged. Hernandez in the candy store shook his head. The janitor, sitting on the stoop, said he was too busy minding his own business to keep track of the tenants.

I went home then. Aching with tiredness, I lay down. Terror gripped me, and I started to shake. Unable to lie still, I got up and ran to the window. I was in the bureau. My eyes flooded with tears, and I sat down and wept. Somewhere someone must have seen Pepe come home! I moved to the window, screaming down at the bare street. “Someone come and help me!” I felt like screaming. Despair and frustration welled up in me.

I rushed out of the apartment and began to pound on the doors again. “Think—try to remember!” I gasped. “Please—you must have seen him!”

The women gathered around me, shaking their heads. “I remember the babushka,” Maria said slowly. I forced a few mouthfuls, choking on the food. “What am I going to do, Ramon?” I groaned.

“He will be freed,” Ramon said softly. “The New York police are clever. They will find the right man.”

For the first time it crossed my mind that someone walked the streets who should be locked up in Pepe’s place. I began to think of my men. I wanted to run along the streets, screaming, shaking strangers until I shook the truth out of someone. I tried to tremble with rage. Dimly I heard the voices of Maria and Ramon pleading with me to get hold of myself. I nodded numbly, feeling suddenly weak and drained.

A little later Ramon walked me home. Along the way realized that he was as helpless and confused as I was about what we could do to help Pepe. For the first time I felt the helplessness and loneliness of a stranger in a strange land.

I went to see Pepe again the next day. Across the table from me, he gave me an eager look. “Did you find anyone who saw me, Carmen?” he whispered.
Unable to get words out, I shook my head. Pepe's eyes went dead, the color drained from his face. "I will try some more," I whispered desperately. "I will find someone!"

He nodded numbly. We stared at each other sadly. After a moment he said, "What will become of you if they don't let me out?"

"I don't know," I choked out. "They have to!"

"Sure," he said listlessly. "Listen, Carmen, I have a week's pay coming. Go and collect it. If they say no, make them give it to you."

The policeman stepped up then, and I knew it was time to leave. I stood up slowly, aching to be close to Pepe, loving him, my eyes. My chest ached as I watched him being led away.

A week passed, then another, and every day I felt a little more heart-sick and helpless. At night I cried bitter tears. Every morning I went to see Pepe, and every day my heart broke when I saw the terrible despair and hopelessness that filled his eyes. I knew no one to turn to, no one to ask for help. My own helpless family. My own reckless actions. I felt as though I were falling down into a dark pit—lost, frightened, and bewildered. I wondered if this nightmare would ever end.

Another week passed. I was running out of money. The bills were piling up, the rent, the payments for the furniture. With a heart hollow with panic, I went to the store where I used to get my old job back. The boss looked at me and shook his head.

"Please," I begged. "I need money."

"I'm sorry, Carmen. You'd kill yourself if you lived like this. Come back here on the baby's born. I'll have a job for you."

When I got home, the landlord was waiting for the rent. "Give me a little time," I pleaded.

"I'll give you till the end of the week," he said curtly and left.

The fear inside me thickened. The next day the men came and took the couch away. The day after the chairs and table. A few days later the television set. I watched them numbly, thinking of all the money we'd paid, all the hours we'd worked. Before my very eyes my life seemed to be crumbling to pieces.

It was Cousin Ramon, his sad eyes surveying the room empty but for the bed and crib, who told me about Welfare. "I would help if I could," he said softly.

"Know," I said numbly.

"You must go tomorrow. They will pay your rent, feed you."

My eyes glittered with tears. Was it for this we'd slaved and sweated to come to this country? "It won't be forever," he said gently.

I went down the next day and made out the application for relief. When I told Pepe what I'd done, his mouth tightened with bitterness. "I hope they all burn in hell," he raged. "I am a man, not an animal to be penned up like this. I can't stand it! Every day is a lifetime! I can't stand it. Carmen!"

The guard tapped him on the shoulder. "Sorry, bud, but you'll have to be quiet."

Pepe's eyes blazed. His body stiffened, and he half rose out of his chair. "Don't!" he said, lashing out. "Don't!" He touched his arm. He stared at me, his eyes hot with misery. Then his body sagged, his face went dead with helplessness.

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My body burned with hate when I left the prison. I wanted to scream, "Why are you crucifying my man? What have we done?" But to whom would I scream? I screamed to no one. I was a blank-faced jailer! The indifferent walls? The screeching subway? So the days passed. I mourned for Pepe like he was dead. My nights were sleepless. I ached to hug him and talk to him. My days were full of gloom and hopelessness.

In August, five weeks after Pepe's arrest, our baby was born a healthy, fine boy... toward. All during my night-long labor I cried for Pepe. The need to have him near was so great I thought I'd die without him.

Our son, David, was born at dawn, a lusty, squawling, angry little thing with the soft curls of his father framing his tiny face. Our American child, I thought, and my heart twisted with sadness. What would be his life? A father in jail, a mother living on charity. My heart broke into a thousand pieces.

I dreaded the baby's coming home to the empty room. But I found the room way and went to visit Pepe alone. Cousin Ramon, and Maria were waiting. There was coffee on the stove and a meal spread out on the table, and everyone who could afford to had brought a little present for the baby. A lump filled my throat. "Thank you, thank you!" I choked out. I looked at all their gentle faces. Their goodness seemed like a miracle.

As soon as I was strong enough, I took David to the jail to show him to Pepe. They blocked my way, "Sorry, lady, no babies. It's the rule.

"The rule." I could feel my beginning to tremble. "Why don't you take my man out and shoot him?" I cried. "You think that would be more cruel? You are murdering his soul, locking him up like an animal."

All the way home on the subway I wept. People stared. Well, let them stare, I thought defiantly.

I left David with Maria the next day and went to visit Pepe alone. He was trembling as he sat down opposite me. "How is the baby?" he whispered, "Tell me about him. Are—are you all right?"

I nodded numbly. "He is a beautiful baby," I said softly, "strong and healthy. He looks like you, Pepe."

Pepe smiled, "Fine, I came aglow with fatherly pride. Then he sighed, and his face went dead again, and my heart twisted with sorrow.

A week passed. Every day I went to see Pepe. And every day my despair and hopelessness deepened. Afterward I'd walk the streets, burning with sorrow, rage and bitterness. Oh, God in heaven, help us, I kept pleading.

One day as I was leaving the jail, I saw one of the policemen who arrested Pepe. He came over and spoke to me very kindly. "Hello, Mrs. Rivera," he said, "Look. This very month before his trial comes up. The court calendar is awfully overcrowded. It's a rotten shame, if you ask me. Too bad you don't have enough money to buy him out."

"Bail?" I said, frowning. "What is this 'bail'?"

He looked at me, incredulous. "Don't you know that if you put up a certain amount of money, the husband can wait for his trial at home?"

My eyes flew open, wide with hope, and I begged him to tell me more. In- instantly ushered instead of walking, and we went to see the court clerk who explained the whole procedure to me and told me Pepe could be released on bail and that if I went to a bail bondman he would find the money if I paid him a certain percentage.

I hurried home and went straight to see Ramon. Each of us spoke to everyone we knew, and we managed to borrow enough money to pay the bondsman for Pepe's bail.

Pepe came home on a Tuesday. There was still the trial to face, of course, but meanwhile he was free.

When he saw me from bare of furniture, his eyes went weak. "They took everything," he said heavily.

I nodded sadly, then, forcing a smile. I said, "Come and see David. Today we shouldn't be sad. Come and play with the crib, where David lay sleeping."

Pepe stared at him, his eyes widening with pride and awe. "So big!" he gasped.

"He's always eating," I laughed.

Pepe leaned over the crib, scarcely breathing, and touched his lips to the baby's face. His eyes were misty when he leaned away. "He's a beautiful baby, isn't he?" he said softly. He pressed his cheek against mine and held me tight. "Oh, Carmen. I'm so glad to be home!"

The room began to fill with people. Everyone in the building came to welcome Pepe home, their soft voices filled with gladness and friendship. Cousin Ramon and Maria came, too. It was like a party. Somebody brought a cake. Somebody else put out a huge boiling bowl of rice and beans. I put on coffee. We started to sing some of our Island songs. Dolores danced. It was like being back home in Peuro Rico. When David was asleep, I took Pepe picked him up and carried him around the room to show everyone. "My son. See—my son."

It was late when everyone left. I started to pile dishes in the sink. Pepe came over and took the plates from my hands. "They can wait," he said huskily. "I can't."

He drew me against him and held me tight. And when Pepe's lips fastened on mine, the breath went out of me and my heart pounded happily.
At breakfast the next morning I fixed Pepe fried bananas and good strong coffee. I couldn't keep my eyes off him. It was like a feast, having him across the table, and my foolish tongue ran on and on about how I was to have him home. Pepe smiled as I talked, but his eyes looked sad. My tongue faltered. "Pepe?"

"His mouth tightened, and he stared down at his plate.

"What is it, querido?" I said softly.

He lifted his face slowly, and his eyes were full of fear. "Suppose they find me guilty, Carmen?" he said hoarsely.

"They can't," I said desperately. "You're innocent. They won't!"

"I'd kill myself," he groaned. "I mean—it'll kill myself before I let them lock me up and I was to have him home. Pepe, don't talk that way," I pleaded. "We must try not to think about it.

Pepe stared at me bleakly. "Sure," he said bitterly, "I won't give it another thought."

A knot of agony wound through my chest. I started to tremble. Dear God in heaven, help us, help us, I begged.

But God had been to see as near my cry. We were out buying the groceries later that morning when a voice said, "Rivers?" A policeman motioned us to stop.

Pepe froze. I stared at the cop, stunned, and my nerves began to scream with tension.

"What do you want?" Pepe muttered.

"I've been asked to get a good look at you," he said. "I'm responsible for this block. I'll be watching you, so don't try any funny stuff."

He turned and walked away. Pepe's face was white as a sheet, and his hands were trembling.

"Let's go," I said softly.

All the way home Pepe's face did not move a muscle. He looked like a sleepwalker. As soon as we got inside, he slumped onto the bed face down. I stood over him, my heart burning with sorrow. He turned over and looked up at me with fear in his white face. "It is no different than being in jail," he said numbly.

"No, Pepe, it will end," I said desperately. "It has to."

But I was wrong. The next morning as Pepe was getting ready to go job hunting, there was a knock at the door. When I opened it, Donovan, the detective, stepped into the room, followed by two policemen. "Stand up, Rivers," he said.

For a moment Pepe hesitated, his eyes filling with defiance. The policeman motioned him to rise, and he got up like goals in his white face. "It is no different than being in jail," he said numbly.

"No, Pepe, it will end," I said desperately. "It has to."

But I was wrong. Pepe got to his feet, his stiff arms ending in balled fists. I looked on sickly white while the policemen searched him.

Meanwhile Donovan was rummaging through our things. "Okay. Let's go. Nothing here," he said.

They started to move toward the door. "Wait!" I cried. Donovan turned and looked at me. "Why are you hounding us? What did you want?" I groaned in misery.

"Strictly routine, lady. There was a holdup in the neighborhood early this morning. Just checking on everyone who's been in town.

Strictly routine. Those words twisted through my brain long after they'd left. Strictly routine. As though it was normal to see the police break into your home! It was like entering another world, a dark, horrible, unknown world where there were only two kinds of people—the hunted and the hunters. And we were the hunted. I was frightened, more frightened than I'd ever been before in all my life.

Pepe did not look for a job that day or the next. He stayed in the house, embittered, fearful. I watched his drawn, tormented face, his eyes filled with bitter hopelessness, and despair and fear grew in me.

After that every time someone came to the door, my heart would skip a beat. On the street it was even worse. Every policeman and every good seemed to know who Pepe was. At the sight of one of them, I'd cringe. Some would say things. Others would search Pepe for weapons. A crowd would gather. And then the police would leave and the people would drift away, leaving Pepe and me standing there, white faced, sick with shame, sick with a helpless anger that chilled and boiled in us.

Still, Pepe managed to get a job the following Monday in the kitchen of a midtown restaurant. Things seemed a little better after that. The job helped Pepe get his mind off his troubles. The tension and fear began to leave but face. I, too, relaxed a little. That Saturday he got his first pay. We splurged a little, bought a steak for supper, a fuzzy rabbit for David in the five-and-dime. The good feeling lasted all week end.

On Monday Pepe came home early. My heart sank when I saw the sick, angry look on his face. "Somebody told the manager I was under indictment for robbery," he said heavily.

"He fired you?"

Pepe nodded numbly.

I sat down and covered my face. Was there no end to the nightmare. I wondered. The future unreeled before my eyes, as hideous as these past months. When I looked up, Pepe's eyes glittered with angry tears.

"They'll make a criminal of me," he said hoarsely. "They'll hound me and push me, and someday I'll break. Someday I'll kill somebody." His fists were clenched, his eyes wild with desperation. "It will end. It will end. It has to!" But even to me the words sounded like a lie.

Pepe tried again. He started job hunting the next day. And nothing turned up that day or the next or the next. Perhaps it was the look in his eyes—the frightened defiance of a hunted animal. Every place he went, he was followed by the cop.

Our money ran out. We had to apply to Welfare again. The woman who came to investigate had a disapproving look on her face. She wasn't as nice as the other woman who'd been seen. Pepe tried to explain that he would rather work than take charity. She listened, disbelieving, her eyes sweeping our barren room.

"You come here and get in trouble, and then expect the city to take care of you," she said as she filled in our application.

Pepe's face flooded with anger. I was sick with terror that he'd say something. I held him as tight as I could to be sure he was still. We needed the relief money. David had to be fed. We had to keep a roof over our heads. He sat with his teeth clenched until the lady left.

As soon as she closed the door, he leaped up, his eyes burning and began to pound on the wall. His anger spent, he slumped into a chair and buried his face in his hands, and the violence of his silent weeping shook his body.
Pepe hardly left the house after that. Sometimes he slept and sometimes he sat in a chair, hour after hour, his face sullen and bored, reading Spanish books or just staring. Always his eyes were haunted with fear and bitterness.

My heart twisted with pity, seeing him like that. My eyes burned all the time with tears I dared not shed. Oh, Pepe, dear Pepe, what have they done to you?

The only time Pepe smiled was when he played with David. He was sweet with the baby. Holding him on his lap, he'd talk to his son. "Smile, muchachito-yes, like that. You know me, David. You smile for Daddy." Sometimes he would sing to him. He spent hours carving a doll for David out of a block of wood. "I wish I was tiny, David," he said.

But away from David the sweetness and peace would vanish from Pepe's face, and the fear and bitterness would return. My heart would bleed for him. I'd run my fingers along his face trying to erase the harsh lines. He'd look at me with dead eyes, his face stiff with the effort of holding in his feelings.


Sometimes a ghost of a smile would flicker across his mouth, never reaching his eyes. Other times he'd turn away. And all the words that would conspire to console him, that would give him back his courage. But what could I say that would not be a lie? So I said nothing, trying to tell him with my eyes how much I loved him, how much I suffered for him.

The only thing that kept me going was the nearness of the trial. I dreamed all the time of the trial, again and again in my mind I heard the judge say, "Not guilty, case dismissed." And then the nightmare would be over and we would build a life again. I clung to this image, this fantasy. Without this hope I would die.

Meanwhile the police continued to question Pepe. Whenever a crime was committed within twenty blocks of us, Donald was in and out of the room upside down. It's funny what you can get used to, or deaden yourself to. When a policeman stopped us, I felt nothing but resignation and a dumb kind of animal panic that went away when he moved on. And when Donald came to search the room, I'd watch numbly, thinking only of the tidying up I would have to do without him.

It was like a living death, our numbness and resignation.

The final blow came on a Wednesday, early in October. Pepe and I were eating our breakfast when Donald came with two policemen. I stared at them numbly as they moved toward us. Pepe stood up before they said anything and lifted his hands to his head.

"Get your coat, Pepe. You're coming down to headquarters with us," Donald said softly.

Pepe looked startled, his hands frozen in mid-air.

I watched as Donald, my throat thickening with terror. "Strictly routine, Mrs. Rivera," he said quietly. Pepe got his coat silently, his face blank, his thin hands like all the world was weighing on them.

After they were gone, I sat paralyzed until David woke up. My legs were stiff when I stood up, and my arms could hardly hold him. I held him close to me, and my tears began to wet his little face.

The morning passed slowly. Unable to sit still, I cleaned and cleaned. And all the time Pepe's face clouded over when I saw his white face, his eyes haunted by shame. I was afraid to speak, afraid to ask him what had happened. He moved around restlessly, touching things, stopping them again in sharp, nervous jerks, as though trying to escape some awful memory.

Suddenly, his eyes blazed, he turned and faced at me. He looked at me with six other men," he chocked out. "Bright lights shining in our faces, a ruled paper behind us to show how tall we were. They made us stand there like that, as though I had no feeling, no heart. This time it wasn't me, though," Pepe said bitterly. "This time it was the boy next to me they arrested."

He started pacing again, his fists clenched, his mouth bitter. I watched him, my heart bleeding. "I'm sorry," I said softly. I took him in my arms and held him like a hurt child. It was then I felt something hard against my hip. I looked, and my mouth was empty. "What have you got in your pocket?" I said, stunned.

Pepe's eyes slid away from mine.

"You have a gun," I said sickly. "Why, Pepe? What are you lookin' at David?"

He didn't answer. "Pepe," I sobbed. "have you gone crazy? Have all our troubles robbed you of your senses? Don't you know what will happen when they find David?"

"They won't find it," Pepe said harshly. "Give it to me," I rasped. He shook his head, his eye filled with defiance.

"What are you going to do?" I said.

"I am going to get money, Carmen," Pepe said grimly. "enough to get us out of this town."

"I won't let you!" I shouted.

"I can't take it any more!" he said desperately. "I would kill myself before I got dragged down to another line-up."

"Give it to me—please, Pepe! You won't solve anything with a gun," I put my hand out. He shook his head, his eyes cold with determination. I moved toward him. "Please, Pepe, give it to me."

"Keep away, Carmen," he threatened. "Don't..."

SOMEBODY was pounding at the door. We stared at each other in terror. The pounding continued. Pepe jerked his head toward the door.

"Who is there?" I said weakly.

"Donald." My head began to spin. I felt as though someone had punched me in the stomach. Pepe's hand slid in his pocket as I reached for the door. Donavan took off his hat. "May I come in?" he said softly.

I nodded. I was trembling as I followed him inside. Pepe was standing like a rock, his hand jammed into his pocket, a look of such desperation in his eyes that it filled me with a sick horror. I knew he'd shoot if Donovan
father that I'd finally run away to San Francisco from Pa's broken-down farm near Bakersfield.

When I got to San Francisco, I immediately looked through newspaper want ads to get a job. I knew I couldn't possibly fill any of the ones calling for typists, etc., so I took a chance and answered one that called for show girls. People back home were always saying I was pretty enough to be in show business. Maybe I'd be lucky enough to get into it even though I was green as grass.

The man who placed the ad didn't waste words once he looked me over. "You'll do," he said, leering at me. "The job's yours if you'll do a strip-tease."

I wanted to slap that grin off his face, but in the spot I was in, I just couldn't. Just the same I was so horrified I walked out and slammed the door behind me.

It was raining and cold, and I had no place to go. I passed a restaurant and almost fainted from hunger as I caught

the odor of hot food. Strip or starve. I slowed my walk and pulled my thin coat around me. I tied my knotted hair in front of my stomach, and I moaned softly. Strip or starve. No one in San Francisco knew me. It would just be a temporary job, something better would come along. I turned and went back to the burlesque office, hoping another girl hadn't landed the job.

I would have broken away if it hadn't been for the kids—my sister and two brothers. But I knew what a rotten time the three of them must be having with me gone and Pa kicking them around and roaming how he wished they'd never been born—the same as he used to yell at me. Emmy was only fifteen and George and Alma eleven and nine, and I just about went crazy at times worrying over them. But sending money helped a little. I sent it to Mrs. Grady, the next-door neighbor, and asked her to buy the kids clothes and see that there was decent food in the house. I
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JOHN W. \n
WANTED

Before

After

An officer was reciting the charge against me in a monotonous drone while the middle-aged judge blinked at me with disapproval from behind his glasses.

Fifty-

I looked through all of it, and I meant it. And I needed every cent I’d managed to save. That’s why I dared interrupt Judge Anders then and plead for mercy, telling him I wanted to make my own living.

When I finished, I held my breath and anxiously awaited to hear what he’d say. So much depended on his answer.

I hope you mean it when you say you’re going to make your own life over, he said finally, after a minute or so of thoughtful silence. All right—if you leave town within forty-eight hours, I’ll suspend the fine.

I had been a long time since I’d smiled, but I was smiling then. Fifty bucks saved by the bell!

“I’ll be out of town tomorrow. Your Honor. I promise!”

I went to a quiet little summer resort in Wisconsin because a vacation pamphlet at the travel bureau spoke of clean, cool air and whispering pines. And that’s what I needed more than anything. I felt tired and bored, and I made me long for green grass and cool rivers and the peace of country woods. And when the bus pulled up in front of the rustic lodge that was the resort office, I felt peace enter my heart.

I can’t tell you the change that came over me once I got there. I was all alone, but not lonely. I walked for hours, thinking over all the mistakes and bad decisions of my life, and I felt no bitterness. It was bad, but it was over. Here in this simple, quiet spot I could rest, refresh myself, and start a new life.

And then one day while I roamed the woods behind the cabins, I saw Greg. He was sprawled on the grass, reading a book, his white shirt open at the neck. When he heard me, he looked up and smiled—the friendliest, sweetest smile I’d ever seen.

“Hello.” That rich, vibrant voice was like the warm touch of a hand. “Do you know what I’m doing? I’m reading about the circus and I’m thinking it would be wonderful. Sit down and listen to this,” he chuckled and then started a passage from the book.

I learned so much about him that afternoon. He told me he’d been a minister for seven years and how much he liked the little Minnesota town where he’d been newly transferred. He spoke of church socials and ball games and how he reduced the church debt, and I sat there and listened with growing wonder. I didn’t know very much about ministers, but Greg didn’t seem a bit like anything I’d imagined. He wasn’t serious and cold. He was gentle and fun loving, and he made working for God seem like the most wonderful job on earth.

“Are you going back out West when vacation’s over?” he asked idly as we sauntered back to the lodge. I’d told him that I’d been clerking in department stores out West.

“I’m sick of the West. I haven’t made many plans, but I guess you’d say I was just drifting,” he took my hand and swung it as we walked up the gravel path.

“I can help in any way, call on me, will you?” I asked. “There’s just one person who’s just drifting needs a friend to steer him on course.”
Tears sprung to my eyes. "Thanks. I think maybe you can help me more than anyone else in the world!"

Greg and I were inseparable during the next year, and a world of wonder opened up to me. Greg taught me to love and forgive my fellow man, never to be afraid, because there was always God to turn to, and to remember that God had quiet, miraculous, impossible situations for every man. I didn’t know much about praying or about God. I was only eleven when Ma died, but I did remember how she knelt with me each night and listened to my prayers and how I always felt better afterward. But that had been so many years ago. I hadn’t thought of praying since.

Greg helped me get a job as a waitress, and one of the people I nodded at during the closing hours was a girl who had been taken ill and had to leave, and when he returned to his Minnesota town, I felt desolate and lost.

It’s only about a hundred and fifty miles to Minneapolis, so Greg smiled as he kissed me good-by. "I’ll try to visit you a few times a month."

I nodded and lowered my head. He mustn’t see my eyes and read the truth. I knew he would try to lift me up with him and that it was the cruelest, most impossible situation on earth.

But because Greg had taught me to pray, I prayed that he might love me, and somehow, I knew that during that long, golden summer, Greg’s little black sedan rolled up the gravel path, and his rich voice boomed out my name.

"Bonnie! Bonnie, where are you, honey?"

And early in September he took me in his arms and whispered those three words I’d prayed to hear.

"I love you!" His lips claimed mine, and he took my hand with rapture.

"Bonnie, will you marry me, darling?"

He was talking on about our being married in his little church and about the pretty little cottage that was his rectory and how all his parishioners were dying to meet me. I knew then that there was no doubt in my mind about telling him of my past. Risk that heaven on earth he was offering me? He could have been a saint but he was also a man in love. I couldn’t.

I pitied his moral strength against his human nature. The West Coast was far away, and my old life was buried.

Greg and I would find happiness together in a new life. Only a fool would first drag out the past.

"MRS. WHITE, it’s time for the next hymn," Addie Young nudged me, and I scrambled to my feet and realized Greg had finished his sermon. I turned the pages of the hymn book quickly, trying to find the right place. All those thoughts of the past had so engrossed me that I hadn’t heard a word of the sermon, and the writer of the words is the opinion of this order. At last, however, I was always safe to say something complimentary. My lips curved in a smile as I sang, and my eyes roamed over the faces of the congregation.

My little Peter was there in the first row, squirming with a three-year-old’s impatience and getting dark looks from an older child beside him. I spied Helen McGregor, Greg’s secretarial assistant, and made a mental note to tell her that Greg gave his permission for the dance the kids wanted to hold.

Suddenly I broke off singing, my third finger of my right hand on a man whose face was turned in profile.

Those broad shoulders, those eyes blinking in a quick, nervous manner behind glasses—I swayed, and yet my eyes never moved from the man. It couldn’t be—he couldn’t be Judge Anderson! And now that man turned back to the pulpit, and I strained forward, trying to get a better view of him. And then the service ended, and Greg was walking down the aisle to the exit. I ran to the door at the as the churchgoers left.

"Come on, Bonnie. Time to take our roasts out of the oven," Charlotte Kimball called cheerily as she closed the organ and switched off the lights.

But I was waiting for the broad-shouldered man to move out of his pew and face the rear of the church as he started down the aisle. Three or four people stopped him at his as they passed, and I dug my nails into a chair back, waiting—waiting for him to turn around. At last he moved from the pew, and I held my breath.

And then—just one close look, and I felt my blood turn to ice water. I wanted to scream, but I couldn’t. My eyes fastened on him until he passed beyond the von, and then I crept slowly downstairs and darted into a closet until I was sure that the judge had walked out.

Why was he here in this little Minnesota town? Could he possibly know that I’d married Greg? Did he know about the baby? About my hundred fearful questions nagged at me as I slipped out of the closet and ran from the church to our little house next door.

Peter and Greg came in a little later just as I put dinner on the table, and I gave Greg a quick, fearful look.

"What happened to you, honey?" he asked as he lifted Peter onto his chair.

"That man, Greg. He—" And then I was tearing all over the place trying to find you.”

I felt the wetness of my palms as I rubbed them together.

"I was worried about the roast. I—I hurried right home to see if it had burned."

Greg bit into a slice of meat and grinned.

"You worried for nothing. It’s perfect."

He waved his fork at Peter. "If your wife, cook half as well as your mother can, you’ll be a mighty lucky man, son."

My hands trembled as I passed rolls and vegetables. She’s good at bumps and grinds, too, I added in my mind. You ought to have seen her, son. The hottest stripper on the burlesque circuit. I bit my lower lip hard. Stop it. I warned myself. You can’t have hysterics now.

"By the way, honey," Greg said, "we’re having company tonight. Mrs. Hinkley is bringing her brother over for a little visit. I asked them to come for supper because you would mind."

He was from California—a judge—and it’s the first time he’s been back home here in twenty years. I met him after services. Seems like a fine man."

A bit of food stuck in my throat, and I reached for the Bible, spilling it on the way to my mouth. So that was it! Of all the thousands of little towns in the country, this one had to be Judge Anderson’s former home town. What luck! "How long is he staying?"

I managed to ask.

Greg shrugged. "I don’t know. A few weeks. I guess. Seems all the old timers in town are planning parties for him. They’ve been invited to a couple ourselves."
The quick hope I'd had of pleading illness tonight died a sudden death. I could avoid tonight's meeting, but if there were parties—well, I couldn't stay hidden forever.

SOMEHOW I held on to myself for the rest of dinner, and then when the dishes were done and Peter was settled down for a nap and Greg had gone visiting the sick, I went to my room and let the terrible thought overtake me. What could I do? What would Judge Anders do when he saw me? Would he take Greg aside and tell him the ugly truth? Or would he confide in his sister and let her speak for me—my shame throughout the congregation?

I buried my face in the pillow and clawed at the bedspread in an agony of fear. Was I to do what I was destined to do? Would I let my name be slurred in public? How could I face them all?

I could run away. I sat up abruptly, examining the thought. I could run away this very afternoon, before Judge Anders had a chance to see me, and Greg and my Aunt Phoebe and me—knowing what I'd once been. Shakily I got to my feet and took a suitcase from the closet. But almost at once I knew that idea was no good. Even though my past was so dark, if I ran away, Greg and our son would still be hurt. There'd be sorrow and scandal as tongues wagged, and Greg would be left, bewildered and heartbroken, to wonder why I'd left. No, I couldn't do that. I was as bad as having Greg find out the truth.

I shoved the suitcase back and looked at the clock. Ten minutes after four. Greg would be coming back soon. We'd have a light supper, and Judge Anders would come in. I can't face it, I thought. I gripped the back of a chair, sick with fear. Maybe if I killed myself—but that was a sin. Greg had preached a sermon on suicide just a couple of weeks before. What was it he'd said? That suicide was a coward's way out and that a brave person accepted the trials God placed before him and won through, if that was the best he could. But I'm not brave, I told myself, falling into the chair, whimpering and lost in despair. I'm a wife and mother picturing everything she holds dear being destroyed if I take it all away. Who could be brave at a time like that?

Greg returned, and I talked and fixed a salad for supper and helped Peter set up his toy cars, and the clock ticked on. It was seven. It was time to go up to his supper. Then it was seven. I kept looking at Greg and then at Peter, filling my eyes with the sight of them as though I'd never seen them before, and I jumped, and Greg patted my shoulder as he went to answer.

"What's the matter, darling? You've seemed nervous all afternoon."

I thought, maybe I'd better tell him now, as soon as he returns from the phone, throw it all in his face before the judge gets a chance. My mouth was dry as I stood there at the door, waiting for Greg to finish. Someone was in trouble, and Greg's voice was warm and soothing as he offered consolation.

"The doctor knows best, Mr. Campbell, and I sure Joel will come out of it just fine."

Dimly I realized that the little Campbell boy must be facing the heart operation his mother had dreaded.

"You must pray, Mrs. Campbell." Greg went on more firmly. "God hears every prayer and offers help and comfort. Pray, my dear, and you'll be given strength."

I caught my breath in shock. How many hundreds of times had I heard Greg give that advice? How many times had I followed it since meeting Greg and discovering the truth of his words? And yet today, when the most terrible trial of my life had come, I had been swallowed in panic and despair, and—God forgive me—I had forgotten to pray. I clutched my hands in supplication. It was too late—the judge would ring any minute. Could God answer a prayer in such a short time? Would He forgive me for turning to Him last instead of first?

I closed my eyes and sank to my knees and opened the fears in my heart. I don't know how long I knelt there, but after a while the doorbell rang, and I got up and walked to the hall, Peter following me, and there was no fear to cover me. Greg had just finished talking on the phone, and he joined me in the hall. I stood at his side as he opened the front door.

As Judge Anders turned pale with shock as Mrs. Hindley made the introduction. His lips moved, but no words came. Greg took him by the arm and ushered him into the living room, and Mrs. Hindley and I followed him. Greg sat by my side. Greg was asking the usual polite questions, and the judge answered, but his nervous, blinking stare was ever on me. I could imagine his tormenting and contempt.

When I left the room to put Peter to bed, the judge followed, pretending he was interested in seeing Peter's display of toy cars. While I helped Peter get ready for bed, the judge chatted with him and then stood silently while I heard his prayers. Then I turned off the light and closed the bedroom door behind us, and we faced each other in the hall.

"Bonnie Walters." He took a cigar from his vest pocket and lit it, his face expressing that's what happened to Bonnie Walters.

His voice was flat, without emotion, and he puffed his cigar and looked at me thoughtfully.

"What young man know the truth about you?" he demanded. I shook my head, looking away from him. He went on puffing his cigar, and my nerves grew taut as I waited. It was over. Perhaps when I had stood before him and waited for him to judge me. Only, this time there was far more punishment coming than a fifty-dollar fine. Help me, God, I prayed. Give me strength to bear it when it comes. I looked back at the judge and lifted my chin high.

"When are you going to tell him?"

I took a deep breath and held it in suspense.

He took the cigar from his lips and frowned. "Why should I tell him?" he barked. "I deal in enough human misery, I'm not looking for a chance to add to it."

I let out my breath in a long, shaky gasp and leaned against the wall for support.

"Everyone speaks well of you, Bonnie. I've heard of your fine work with the young people in the church, your helpfulness to those in need. Did you really think I'd destroy all that because
of what used to be Bonnie Walters?" His mouth curved in a faint smile. "After all, child, even the courts refuse try a man twice for the same crime."
I felt tears of gratitude and relief wet my cheeks. All my fears had been for nothing. If I hadn't given in to desperate need, Judge Anders had said, "Why should I tell him?" Yes—why should he? Looking at him clearly and calmly, I could see there was no way to force him to smash my life. It was a good life, and Judge Anders, more than anyone else in my past, would want me to keep that way.
"Come now, dry your eyes and let's have supper," he said with a sort of gruff kindness.
"Yes, in just a moment. You go on ahead," I answered.
He went down the hall to the living room, and I slipped across to Greg's study. There was something peaceful about this little room where Greg spent so many hours. I kept raking a head in a prayer of thanksgiving and found peace settling over me. It had been a terrible trial, but I'd asked for help and found it. How wonderful to know that help was there—always.
I got to my feet and closed the door of the study behind me. Then, with a smile on my lips, I joined the others.

25 Tips for Good Grooming (Continued on page 19)

1. Do you smell as sweet as you look? Take your choice of deodorant—spray, stick, or roll-on—but use it every day under your arms. Sprinkle powder in your shoes if your feet perspire heavily. It goes without saying that a daily bath is a must. Follow it with a dusting of body powder or a sprinkle of toilet water. And a weekly shampoo will keep your hair sweet smelling, too.

12. Are your accessories clean? This means that your handbag is tidy, with a clean lining when opened to public gaze. Give leather linings a saddle soap periodically and cloth linings a going over with benzene or suds. Your powder puff should be washed or changed frequently, your comb always kept clean and free of lint and hair. Of course, your shoes should be brushed daily, and your light collars and cuffs must be above suspicion.

13. Is your makeup right? Always put on makeup in a full light to see that it's straight and not too heavy. Use gradually darker powder as the spring advances into summer and your skin becomes brown. Color your face enough inside so that you have no startling line of demarcation.

14. Do you protect your hair? A bandanna kept for wearing only when you do a dusty job should be one of your most important articles of clothing! Of course, everyone's hair needs daily brushing to remove loose dirt and protect its gloss.

15. Are you kind to your hands? They should be lotioned or creamed after every washing. If the day is extra-husty and you're going out, try rubbing them with raw oatmeal after you dry them with a towel. Wear rubber gloves for mess, harsh jobs. Every so often treat your hands to an overnight beauty treatment. Wear heavy hand cream and cotton gloves to bed. In the morning they'll be smooth.

16. Do you apply your perfume to your skin? Never touch perfume or perfume products, such as toilet water or cologne, to garments. It spots them. Instead put perfume on the bends of the body—back of the knees, inside the elbows, at the base of the throat, behind the ears, and on the ear lobes and the hair.

17. Do you remove your make-up?
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NERIOUS

My name is John Wellington and "nerve" was made my life miserable. For years I suffered with years of pain and suffering. Years of pain and suffering with years of pain. I was prepared to hear the happy news in years—of men and women who suffer with me. I suffered with the agony that so often builds up from simple nervous disturbances. Frustrated offices, fearful of needles, headaches, loss of sleep and appetite. No one seemed to understand. I felt too sensitive, worry about my job, money, health—almost frantic at times. I tried so many things. Then one day I consulted a famous Doctor in New York. He told me about an amazing new medical discovery—new and different. The salve was so effective that I’m happy. I want everyone who suffers to know about this wonderful treatment. It helped fix the problem. For sleeping well at night—for feeling free from the fear of "nerve". Please send your name and address and I’ll make you a free gift of this wonderful news. John Wellington, Apr. 11, 1914.

Treating Your Family to a Special Dinner

(Continued from page 27)

Garlic Steak
2 pounds sirloin steak
1 package of garlic salt
1 tall tin of tiny potatoes

Dust steak generously on both sides with garlic salt and pop into broiler. Serve it on a platter with a garter that will hold its juice, and garnish with tiny potatoes. Tinned potatoes are best because they make an enchanting frame for the steak and are no bother to prepare. Just flip them out of the tin and into the broiling pan just before the steak is done. The steak juices, mixed with the tangy garlic of the salt, will add a new note to the potatoes as it runs over them. Serves 8 to 8.

Baked Glazed Ham

Place ham fat side up on a rack in an open roasting pan, and bake in a slow 325-degree oven, allowing 18 to 20 minutes per pound for a whole, uncooked ham. Fifteen minutes before ham is done, remove it from oven and peel off the rind with a sharp knife. Score the surface of the ham, and spread it with a mixture made by combining enough brown sugar and yellow mustard to make a soft paste. Insert whole cloves in corners made by scoring. Return the ham to oven, and bake for 15 minutes more. Remove ham from oven, and garnish with maraschino cherries.

Baked Peas and Lemon
1 pound can peas, drained
2 teaspoons grated onion
1/2 teaspoon butter or margarine
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 small lemon, thinly sliced

Combine peas, onion, butter or margarine, sugar, and salt; mix well. Turn into 1-quart casserole. Top with lemon slices. Bake in slow 325-degree oven 15 minutes. Serves 4.

Spaghetti with Lamb Balls and Sauce
1 pound ground lamb
1 teaspoon onion salt
1/2 teaspoon celery salt
1/2 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1 1/2-ounce can condensed cream of mushroom soup
1/2 cup milk
3/4 cup chopped parsley
1 tablespoon salt
3 quarts boiling water
8 ounces spaghetti

Combine lamb, onion salt, celery salt, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and pepper; mix well. Shape into 1/4-inch balls. Cook lamb balls over low heat until browned on all sides. Add mushroom soup, milk, and parsley; mix well. Cover and cook over low heat 20 minutes, stirring occasion-

Marjoram Braised Chicken

3- to 4-pound ready-to-cook chicken
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon celery salt
1/4 teaspoon onion salt
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 1/2 teaspoons ground marjoram leaves
1/4 cup shortening
1 cup water
1 cup fresh baby green limas
1 cup sliced fresh carrots

Cut chicken into serving pieces. Combine flour and seasonings and place in a paper bag. Drop chicken into bag and shake to coat each piece with the flour mixture. Place shortening in skillet and heat until hot. Add flour-coated chicken and fry until golden brown, about 20 to 25 minutes. Turn to brown all sides. Add water. Cover. Simmer 15 to 20 minutes. Add vegetables. Cook until tender, about 10 to 12 minutes. Remove chicken and place in center of serving plate. Arrange vegetables on platter around chicken. Make gravy from the liquid in the pan. Season to taste with salt and ground black pepper.

Fruit-Stuffed Pork Chops

1/4 cup seedless raisins
1/4 cup finely cut celery
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
2 tablespoons minced onions
1/4 cup chopped raw apple
1 cup soft bread crumbs
1/4 cup whole-bran cereal
6 port chops, 1 1/4 inches thick
Salt and pepper
2 tablespoons flour
1/4 teaspoon paprika
2 tablespoons shortening
1 cup apple juice or cider

Combine raisins, celery, green pepper, onions, apple, bread crumbs, and bran cereal; mix thoroughly. Slit the pork chops through the middle to form a pocket; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Fill pockets with stuffing and fasten opening with skewers or sew together with coarse thread. Roll chops into a mixture of flour and paprika. Brown on both sides in heated shortening. Pour apple juice over meat; cover tightly. Bake in hot 425-degree oven about 1 hour, or until tender. Serves 6.

Spiced Applesauce with Corn Fritters

2 cups canned applesauce
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon nutmeg

Few grains salt
2 cups cooked or canned corn
4 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup butter

Combine applesauce, brown sugar, butter or margarine, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Heat. Drain corn; mash with potato masher. Add eggs, flour, baking powder, and salt. Mix well. Heat a little butter in skillet. Drop spoonfuls of batter in butter; fry turning to brown both sides, adding more butter as needed. Serve fritters with generous portions of warm spicy applesauce. Serves 4 to 6.

Curried Meat Balls

1 1/2 pounds ground beef
2 cups corn flakes
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/4 cup finely minced onion
1/2 teaspoon thyme
3 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 tablespoons flour
2 cups corn meal
1/2 cup tomato paste
1 1/2 tablespoons curry powder
2 tablespoons water

In a mixing bowl, place beef, corn flakes, crushed slightly, salt, pepper, onion, thyme. Blend these ingredients thoroughly, and shape the mixture into small balls, about 2 tablespoons to a ball. Saute in butter or margarine until evenly browned. Blend in flour and add gradually consomme, tomato paste, and curry powder dissolved in hot water. Cover tightly, and simmer for one hour over very low heat. Serve with rice. Serves 6.

Fresh Vegetable Chow Mein

1/4 cup margarine
1 cup thinly sliced mushrooms
1/2 cup sliced onions
1 medium green pepper in thin strips
1 cup thin celery strips
1/2 pound green string beans, cut lengthwise
4 carrots, cut julienne
2 cups chicken stock or bouillon
2 teaspoons salt
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon dark molasses
2 tablespoons cornstarch
3 tablespoons water
2 tomatoes

Sauté unpeeled sliced mushrooms in margarine to delicate brown and remove. Add onions and pepper; cook 2 minutes. Add rest of vegetables except tomatoes, add also stock, salt, soy sauce, molasses, and sautéed mushrooms and cook 30 minutes. Combine cornstarch and water, add and cook 10 minutes longer. Peel tomatoes, cut in wedges, place on top for the last 5 minutes of cooking. Serve very hot with rice and friend Chinese noodles. Serves 6.

Pork Chop and Peas Skillet

4 pork chops, about 3/4-inch thick
1 medium-sized onion, sliced
1 1-pound can peas
1/4 teaspoon oregano
1/4 teaspoon rosemary
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/4 cup chopped canned pimientos

Cook pork chops and onion over low heat until chops are browned on both sides. Drain peas; serve liquid. Add peas liquid, oregano, rosemary, salt, pepper, and pimientos to pork-chop mixture. Cover and cook over low heat 30 minutes, or until chops are done. Add peas; heat to serving temperature. Serves 6.

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Pork Balls and Peas in Tomato Sauce
1 pound ground pork
1/4 cup fine dry bread crumbs
1 medium-sized onion, chopped
1 1/2 cups milk
2 8-ounce cans tomato sauce
Salt and pepper
1/4 teaspoon basil
1-pound can peas, drained

Combine pork, bread crumbs, onion, and milk; mix well. Shape into 1-inch balls. Cook over low heat until browned on all sides. Add remaining ingredients except peas and basil. Cover and cook over low heat 25 minutes, or until pork balls are done. Add peas and cook 5 minutes. Serves 4.

Cheese Souffle, Paprika
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon salt
Dash cayenne
1 1/2 cups milk
2 cups grated processed American cheese (about 1/4 pound)
6 eggs, separated

Melt butter or margarine; add flour, paprika, salt, and cayenne and blend. Gradually add milk and cook over low heat, stirring constantly until thickened. Add remaining ingredients and stir until smooth. Serves 6.

Swedish Pot Roast
4 pounds pot roast
2 tablespoons bacon fat
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon pepper
1 1/2 cups grated lemon rind
1/2 cup diced onion
1 peeled, sliced garlic clove
1 1/2 cups sour cream
1 6-ounce package fine or medium noodles
1 tablespoon salt
3 quarts hot water

Brown roast in hot fat in skillet or Dutch oven. Add seasonings, grated lemon rind, onion, and garlic. Pour sour cream over all. Cover. Simmer over low heat for 4 to 5 hours. Serves 6.

Chickens Vienna, Sauted
2 broiler-fryers (approx. 3 pounds each)
Salt
Pepper
2 eggs, beaten
Powdered bay leaf
Thyme
Lemon juice

Prepare chickens for frying. Season with mixture of salt, pepper, thyme, powdered bay leaf, and lemon juice. Dip in flour; then in beaten eggs. Dip in bread crumbs once only. Cook in a sautéing pan with sweet butter over a very hot fire, drain, sponge, and season. Dress them dry with a bunch of fresh parsley on top.

Shrimp Croque
1/2 cup butter or margarine
1/2 cup minced green pepper
1 package onion-soup mix
1 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1/4 teaspoon paprika
3 cups tomatoes
1 pound shrimp, cleaned, cooked
2 to 3 cups hot cooked rice

Melt butter and sauté pepper 5 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and add onionsoup mix, seasonings, and tomatoes. Simmer 5 minutes. Add shrimp and heat thoroughly. Serve over the hot rice. Serves 5 to 6.

Broilers in Herb Butter Sauce
1 broiler, cut in quarters
1 teaspoon monosodium glutamate
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon paprika
4 tablespoons butter
1 can (3 or 4 ounces) mushrooms
1/4 cup dry white wine
1/2 teaspoon each, savory, rosemary, thyme and marjoram, optional
1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley
1 bay leaf
3 cups hot cooked rice, optional

Sprinkle chicken on both sides with monosodium glutamate, then with salt, pepper, and paprika. Melt butter in skillet; brown chicken. Drain liquid from mushrooms; add to chicken with wine. Sprinkle with herbs and parsley. Add bay leaf; cover and simmer 45 minutes. Turn once during cooking; add small
amount of water if necessary. Add mushrooms last 10 minutes cooking time. If desired, serve with hot cooked rice. Serves 4.

Creamy Lamb Stew

1 1/2 pounds lean shoulder of lamb
Salt and pepper

Flour
3 medium onions
2 cups hot water
2 cups carrot strips
2 cups potato strips
1 1/2 cups milk

Trim fat from the lamb and melt it in a frying pan. Sprinkle the lamb with 1 teaspoon of salt, a few grains of pepper, and 2 tablespoons of flour, and mix well. Fry in 2 to 3 tablespoons of the hot lamb fat until brown on all sides. Add the sliced onions and the hot water, cover and cook over low heat for 1 to 2 hours or until tender. Add the carrots, potatoes, and 1/2 teaspoon salt about 20 minutes before the end of the cooking time. Mix 3 tablespoons flour and a little of the milk to a smooth paste. Add the remaining milk gradually and pour into the stew. Cook, stirring constantly until thickened. Add more salt and pepper if needed. Serve with hot biscuits. Serves 4.

Maryland Chicken and Crab Casserole

1 can cream of chicken soup
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1/2 cup milk
1 tablespoon grated onion
1 teaspoon turmeric (optional)
1 can cayenne (6-ounce), in chunks
1 can mushrooms (3- or 4-ounce)
1 can crabmeat (6 1/2-ounce)
1/2 teaspoon paprika

In a saucepan, blend together the soups, the milk, the onion, and turmeric. Heat slowly, stirring often to blend. Add the chicken chunks, the drained mushrooms, the drained and flaked crabmeat, and the paprika. Heat well, stirring carefully. Serve over freshly cooked rice or over hot biscuits. Serves 4 to 6.

Chateau Onion Pie

1 1/2 cups fine soda cracker crumbs
1/2 cup milk, better
2 1/2 cups chopped onions, sliced thin
2 tablespoons butter
1 1/2 cups mixed vegetables
3 eggs, slightly beaten
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper

Combine cracker crumbs and melted butter and blend well. Press evenly in a deep 9-inch buttered pie plate. Fry onions in butter until lightly browned. Place on crustscust. Sprinkle milk; slowly add to eggs, while stirring constantly. Add salt, pepper, and parboiled processed cheese food. Pour over onions. Bake in a slow 325-degree oven until a sharp knife inserted in the center comes out clean, about 40 to 45 minutes. Serves 4 to 6.

Stuffed Oyster Loaf

1 loaf French bread
2 dozen oysters (fresh or frozen)
1/2 cup cream
1 tablespoon chopped celery
Pepper and salt
2 drops Tabasco sauce

Cut the top crust of the French bread off and scoop out the inside. Butter just about 1/2 of the portion you have scooped out and toast it in the oven. Fry the drained oysters in butter until their edges curl, then add the cream, celery, pepper and salt, and the Tabasco sauce. Add the toasted bread, mix well, and fill the hollowed loaf with the mixture. Fit the top crust back on the bread and bake 20 minutes at 400 degrees, basting frequently with the liquor from the oysters. Slice and serve hot. Serves 6.

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HIM!

M y poor husband. Living with me had become torture for him, I'd become such a nag. And the worst part of it was I just couldn't help myself. I felt so tired and worn-out - even an afternoon nap didn't help. When Phil came home from work, I was so nervous and irritable I jumped on every word he said.

I loved my husband dearly, but instead of being an understanding wife, I started arguments over nothing at all. I could see the strain telling on Phil. After all, no man likes a woman ruining his life!

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