

Helped Him More Than Sunshine

By MARTHA WILLIAMS

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THE Oracle spoke: "If you know what's good for you, you'll stay right here. What would folks say—a young thing like you runnin' off to work for a man she's never seen nor even heard of till last week?"

"A plenty—and more besides," June flung back desperately. "I'm a babe of course—twenty-five next birthday. And I am not afraid of work, nor of men—nor even of the devil—if I don't ask him in."

"He don't wait on askin'," the Oracle blurted. June shrugged impatiently. "I'm goin'," she said grimly. "I won't stay here, starvin' on a hundred a year—and working harder than any other girl in town to pay my kind friends for what I don't get."

She flung away high-headed. The Oracle looked after her with pursed lips, a shaken head. Her mind's eye saw June's finish—the gutter, the river, the morgue, when the monster who was enticing her to destruction had tired of her. She was going thus to a man who had advertised for "A woman with a gift of home-making, in a secluded country house." Her heart was in home-making—it was her art, her joy.

Dawn melted into daylight as she quitted the train. The way station lay silent betwixt woods and pastures. Then with a snort of the engine the long train whirled away, revealing beyond the tracks a car that had seen better days, with a woman, plump, placid, gray-haired at the wheel. "You look like the answer to prayer," she said, motioning June to her side. "I won't tell you why—better let you see for yourself. There's time for you to wash up, rest a bit, and eat breakfast before Esme wakes. Poor soul! Sleep was hard for him—he was so anxious over your coming."

Esme came to the table, clean kempt, pathetic beyond words, in a wheel chair, propelled by his double—tanned and rugged as he was bleached and wasted. Twin brothers, the Trents were no closer in blood than in heart and spirit.

"Helpless—and the doctors say there is no hope of betterment, yet he may live to be old," Hardin Trent said as they went out upon the porch. "He loves beauty in everything. You must give it to him. I see in your eyes that you can. Cousin Emma, dear, good soul, has the best heart, and the worst taste in the world."

So, indeed, it proved. Six months later the solid old red brick house was transformed within and transfused without. Her joy was nothing beside Esme's; he gained in spirit, in color, a little in ease and strength. He spent hours in the grounds, watching the flowers grow and blow, the new shrubs make root and stem, the vines clamber lustily over the new trellises, the turf thicken as summer strengthened. He could push himself along the walks, but Hardin was close by half the time. June also haunted him—it was so piteous to see him brighten at sight of her, and smile when she gave him a gay word. "You help him—more even than sunshine," Hardin said to her, his tone faintly wistful. "And I simply can never thank you enough—you don't know, but he is as he is because of me. Dragged me away from a falling tree. His foot hung—it caught him. Death would have been ten times easier than living to see him so. He was the lithest, merriest, happiest creature, so winning dogs followed him, women were wax in his hands. We were always close friends—now we are all in all to each other—and will be to the end of time."

Time ambled withal brought frost to nip the turf, the flowers, snow to mantle them into more subtle beauty, brought also warmth, and freshness and merry talk about the hearth, or happy silences beneath the reading lamp. Esme gained steadily, but very slowly. One month he could pick his guitar, singing to it in a fine tenor, inaudible across the room; the next he raised himself unaided by holding to the arms of his chair—after New Years he actually stood upright for five seconds, Hardin supporting one arm, June the other. Sinking down, his face illumined, he drew their hands together and held them upon his breast. There they felt his heart pounding at racing speed, with now and then the veriest ghost of a skip. He smiled up at them, saying clearly, "Mustn't try that again—for your sakes. It would end everything quickly. You'd grieve for me I know. Tell me truly will you let me live on as I am, and watch your happiness?"

"What happiness?" Hardin asked huskily. June turned her head. Esme again joined their hands and lifted them to his lips before answering: "The right human happiness of man and wife. You love each other—I have seen that a long time—but I have stood between you. No, no—" as they would have protested, "I was jealous—madly so! It seemed to me you had no right to take—what is forever denied me. I dreamed even of getting well—of daring you to rival me with—June. The dream is ended—take you each the other, with my blessing. Do it quickly—before I go."

The last words whispered, Hardin and June stood apart, looking lovingly at this man and brother. "Kiss me, both. I must sleep," he said. And so fell into the sleep that knows no waking.

A Theory That Was Proved

By H. IRVING KING

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CAROLINE PENDERGAST had a theory and set out to prove it. Her theory was love at first sight. She was a sprightly young lady and was in the habit of falling in love with bewildering versatility. There was young Silas Watson. She was sure she was in love with Silas until she saw him wearing a horrible purple tie. Then there was Raymond Caruthers. Raymond was so perfectly correct in his attire, his manners were so polished, his black eyes so expressive that Caroline, when she was introduced to him, told herself that she had surely contracted a case of love at first sight. But when she knew him better and found out what outrageous grammar he used her love was swept away.

Then came into her ken Thomas Williams, the schoolmaster. He boarded with the Pendergasts. Farmer Pendergast lived near the village and was well to do. But he was a thrifty soul and took occasional boarders. Tom Williams was just out of college and was teaching for a while preparatory to entering the Institute of Technology. He was rather long and gawky and sparing of speech. Caroline looked him over and decided that he would never do at all for a soulmate.

She was a little piqued, however, that Tom paid so little attention to her. He was always polite to her, of course, but there was an aloofness about him which nettled her and she found herself putting forth all the little arts of which she was master to attract the admiration of "pa's boarder." And she succeeded. Tom, in fact, soon found that he was in love with her, but he knew Caroline's reputation for inconstancy in love.

Tom and Caroline, however, as they came to know each other better, became very good friends.

About this time there arrived in the village a young man who seemed to Caroline to be all that she had dreamed of, all that she had been searching for. He was said to be the agent of a big New York firm that intended establishing a summer resort on the shore three miles away. Caroline bore down on the fascinating stranger like a beautiful yacht under full sail and threw out her grapping irons. The young man's name, as he gave it out, was Percival Sommers; which name added just the right touch as a finisher to his perfections.

Soon after Percival's arrival Tom and he met in the village street. Both stopped and stared at each other, saying simultaneously: "You here?"

Percival seemed very much disconcerted at the meeting and said: "You won't give an old college mate away, will you, Tom? I am down here lying perdu for a while. One of my little escapades. Nothing very bad; but thought it best to keep out of sight for a while."

"I will not give you away, Ben," replied Tom, "if you behave yourself. But the very first time I see you up to any of your old dodges, or hear of your being, I will denounce you." And he passed on with a scowl on his face.

Ben Ringwood's career at college had been disreputable, and his career after leaving college had been more so. Tom knew all about him. Pretty soon Tom saw that Caroline had become enamored of Ben Ringwood, alias Percival Sommers.

If he told Caroline what he knew about the man she would simply laugh at him and attribute it to jealousy. He resolved to go to Ben and tell him to leave town. "Sure, I'll leave town," said Ben. "I've had all I want of this hole. And, just to show you that I'm still in the ring, I might add that, if I wanted to, I could take along with me that pretty daughter of your landlord, old Pendergast." And he handed Tom a letter in which the foolish girl had offered to elope with her Percival, making an appointment for that very night in a certain woodland glade. "Be out of this town tomorrow morning," said Tom, and went home.

That night, when Caroline came to the rendezvous, it was not Percival but Tom she found waiting for her. She gave a little scream when she saw him. Tom told her all that he knew about Ben Ringwood and of what had taken place between them that day.

"You are just as horrid as you can be, both of you," sobbed Caroline. "I'll never speak to either of you again," and ran back to the house.

The next morning Ben Ringwood, alias Percival Sommers, was arrested by officers in New York charged with embezzlement. There were other charges—bigamy and a few little things like that. Two days later Caroline, very pale and serious, came to Tom and said: "Tom, I can never thank you enough for saving me from the results of my folly."

"Caroline," said Tom, "do you think you could—er—like me a little?"

She gazed at him silently for a while and then said: "Tom, you are one of the few young men whom I have met that I did not fall in love with at first sight. What I feel for you has been of a steady growth and, therefore, I think it must be the real thing."

"And I," he replied, "have loved you since first I saw you."

"Well," said she with a laugh, "there is such a thing as love at first sight, after all. You have proved my theory, Tom; take me if you will. And then he kissed her.

Chicago Citizens To Hold Mass Meeting This Evening

Chicago, Jan. 19.—Holding that Chicago faced a problem of life or death, Edward J. Kelly, municipal chief engineer, today called on the people to hold mass meetings tonight all over the city to protect against reducing the water withdrawal from Lake Michigan.

Chicago needs the 10,000 feet per second withdrawal allowed at present to fight off pestilence, Kelly said. "Delay in impressing Washington with the existence of the menace means death in every glass of water," Kelly said.

If the flow is cut down, sewage will contaminate the city's drinking water and a "huge harvest of death" will follow, Kelly said.

Petitions bearing thousands of names will be placed before Secretary of War Weeks, who is expected to decide whether the present flow is

to be reduced in accordance with the decision of the United States supreme court.

Tide Of Battle In Shanghai Area Turns

Shanghai, Jan. 19.—(Special to Daily Democrat)—The tide of battle in the Shanghai area has turned suddenly and now defeated troops of Chi Kai-ho Yuan are pouring towards this city, looting and rioting as they come.

The former ally of Tu Pei-fu, who sprang a sudden coup d'état, and took the native city ten days ago, was



Called meeting. Work in Entered Apprentice, Tuesday, 7 o'clock. John Dickerson, W. M.

badly beaten by troops of Lu Yung made by Jacob Stalner, a German, in

Hsiang and now finds his own forces

demoralized and in flight.

A regiment of British troops are reported enroute from Hong Kong to help guard the foreign settlements.

Washington.—Roy King, of Pond,

near here, claims the oldest violin

in the state. The instrument was

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Last Time Tonight

THE DELIGHTFUL DRAMA

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Featuring the Wonder Star,
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A drama of mother love woven around
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ALSO—A "FAST STEPPERS," feature.

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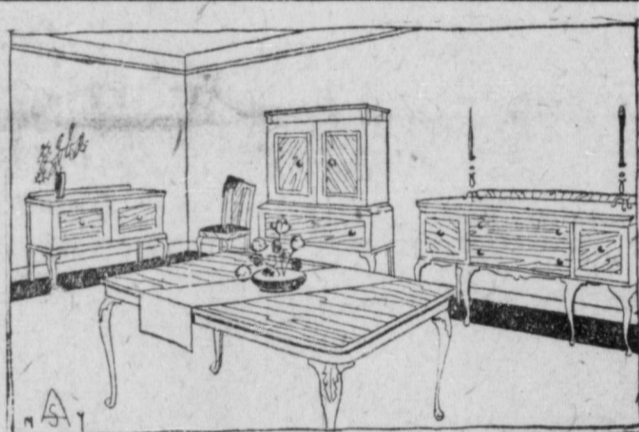
January Clearance Sale

"The Half Century Furniture Store"

CUT PRICE FURNITURE SALE

Starts Monday Morning January 19th

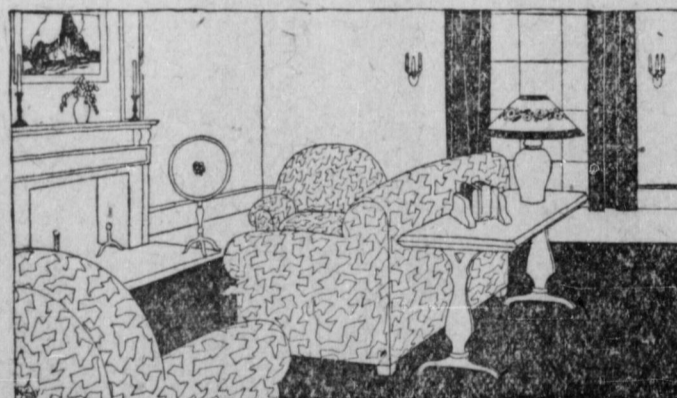
WE MUST REDUCE OUR STOCK AND WE WILL SELL ANYTHING AND ALL STOCK
AT A REDUCED PRICE. EVERYTHING MARKED IN PLAIN FIGURES. IF YOU ARE
EXPECTING TO ADD ANY NEW PIECE OF FURNITURE TO YOUR HOME—NOW IS
THE TIME TO BUY IT.



Dining Room Suites

Walnut Dining Room Set, reduced from \$159.50 right down to rock bottom at..... **\$135.00**
Walnut Dining Room Set, regularly priced at \$195.00.
Going to some one during this sale **\$156.00**
for

MANY OTHER GOOD BARGAINS



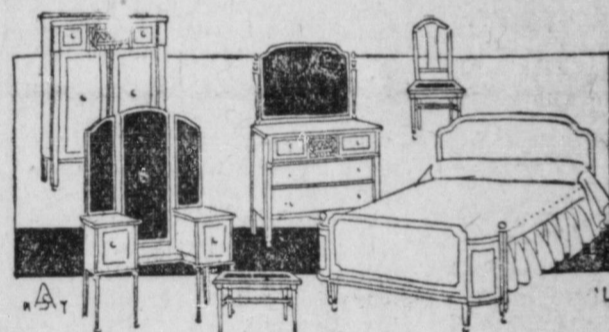
Living Room Suites

3 piece Living Room Suite; formerly sold for **\$90.00**
\$150; Special at **\$90.00**

3 piece Living Room Suite, regularly priced at \$188; Now **\$148.00**

3 Piece Living Room Suites; regular \$90 marking for.... **\$75.00**

3 piece Living Room Suite; Regular \$145.00; During this sale **\$90.00**



Bed Room Suites

Walnut Dresser, regularly priced at \$56.00; **\$43.00**

Special during this sale only at.....

3 Piece Bed Room Set in Walnut, regular price was \$168.00;

Special during this sale at **\$140.00**

Other Wonderful Bargains To Be Had

All Other Furniture Reduced

Such As

Kitchen Cabinets

Odd Dressers

Kitchen Tables

Odd Chiffoniers

Drop Leaf and End Tables

Library Tables

Cedar Chests

Davenport Tables

Iron and Brass Beds

ROCKING CHAIRS

All Kinds of Rocking Chairs in any finish
will be cut in price in this sale.

Yager Brothers Furniture Store

Opposite Public Square—East Side

Decatur, Indiana