

Magicians Forego Crystal
Clinton, Iowa (U.P.)—Crystals, tea grounds and cards are no longer tolerated by the better magicians and clairvoyants, said L. R. Gaerner, St. Louis, president of the

Mississippi Valley Spiritualist Association. He described them as Carl, a farmer, likes her name and her boss so well that she lays eggs inscribed with "J." The embossed letter is perfectly formed on some eggs, Carl reports.

Hen Likes Her Name
Belle Plaine, Iowa (U.P.)—Jenny,

"WIFE IN CUSTODY" by BEATRICE LUBITZ

CHAPTER I

THE Anastasia Beauty Salons were not officially open for appointments until nine in the morning, but the operators were required to be at sharp. Nor did the beauticians enter through the luxurious velvet and silk reception room, with its elegant chairs and its bowls of fresh flowers on self-conscious little tables.

There was a shabby footmarked door behind the elevators, marked in peeling gilt letters EMPLOYEES, that led into a long narrow room bordered on one side by white washbowls under dingy mirrors and on the other by green perforated steel lockers. At the door bristled a time clock. A few lumpy chintz and wicker chairs stood uninvitingly about.

At eight o'clock any morning the room sprang into life; girls rushed in and with more than ordinary viciousness pumped the long red hand of the time clock.

The operators then stepped briskly out of their own clothes into an Anastasia uniform, hung in a paper bag on the outside of each locker and left there a few minutes earlier by the laundress.

The Anastasia uniform was a tailor-made white broadcloth dress (the girls paid for them but the Salons took care of the laundering). The passionate desire of every woman at the time was to look boyish and tight brassieres flattened their breasts back so harshly that the long-waisted, short-skirted dresses in vogue in 1921 made the Anastasia beauticians look like so many leggy, white-frocked little school-girls from the neck down!

There was no loitering in the washrooms, because in winter the room was five degrees colder than the street and in summer it was a vapor bath. It was bitterly agreed by all that the Rileys, who owned the Anastasia chain of beauty salons, had purposely planned this fiendish discomfort to discourage lingering in the washrooms. Smoking was hysterically forbidden.

As they dressed and changed to the white shoes and stockings that completed the outfit, there was a wealth of colorful profanity on behalf of the Rileys. They had, however, to be always on the qui vive. One never knew when a Riley would pop in on them. This uncertainty added spice and the thrill of danger to the most innocent conversation.

Twenty-five girls were now in the cramped, air-tight vault of a room, washing, changing and making up their complexions with cakes of rouge. At each door a sentry was posted to keep watch and warn of the approach of one of the Riley sisters, daughters of old Anastasia Riley, for whom the business was named. Fortunately, Miss Stella Riley, who was in charge of this, the Forty-fourth Street branch, could since her marriage several months ago be depended upon not to get in before ten.

There was a whole hour before the phone would begin its strident buzzing and the appointments to flock in. As soon as the girls were uniformed they slumped out of the washroom into the salon. All the preparations for the day had to be made in this one hour. They darted back and forth along the smooth floor, tiled like a Roman bath.

The salon was a splendid high-ceilinged room, about a hundred feet long and half as wide, on the fifteenth floor of the Federal Trust Building on Forty-fourth Street at Fifth Avenue. It had solid white marble slabs for dressing tables and glittering bevelled mirrors. The room was partitioned off into isles of cubicles hung with black and white rubberized silk curtains. Each cubicle was a unit of glittering efficiency.

The manicuring tables flanked the windows and the morning sun gleamed on the shining array of scissors and files and clippers. Now the beauticians were stacking up towels and linen sheets which were counted and checked out by Dolly, the colored "linen" girl who was as heavily keyed as a warden. The seven manicurists stacked up nests of rose-colored fluted paper dishes for the finger dipping bowls and checked in their needs. These were then okayed by Miss Norma, in charge of supplies, who also waited on the outside trade. There was yet to be an operator who could slip a cake of nail polish into her pocket for the kid sister at home or filch a tube of hair cream for her own use.

From the doorway where Miss Vera was on guard: "Sh... sh... not so loud. I just saw a dame who looked like Frozen Face. But it wasn't. Anyway, pipe down."

At the mention of their common enemy, it was as if a strong wind swayed them all together. No topic of conversation was so aggressively stimulating as a discussion of the Rileys. The four Riley sisters, Anastasia Riley, the mother, and Wal-

ter Riley, the only man in the family who owned the shops, were an endless and fertile field for gossip and abuse. And the elopement, over a month ago, of Stella Riley, who ruled this branch of the chain with a mailed fist, was still new enough to offer rich possibilities for conjecture. It was common knowledge that Jerry Leach, the husband, who was now in charge of the only Brooklyn branch of the business, had been a riding master in the Central Park Academy. Miss Stella Riley in the past had been in the habit of riding every morning and coming in in her stunning riding habit, later to change in her private

on occasion, certain frowsy women to whom Irene Riley gurgled "Lady this" or "Lady that." Occasionally a man (usually an actor) came to Forty-fourth Street for a hair wash by the famous Anastasia Method (which included fresh rose petals in the last water—a Riley touch). The swish of water in the basins, the thick scent of creams, powders, polishes. The whine of the dryers; the hiss and sizzle of steam. The soft hum of conversation and from the desk the singsong voice of Miss Irma: "Anastasia's Forty-fourth Street. Good mawn-ing."

The beauticians were no longer living, breathing girls; they were



Helen Schiller was noticeably lovely but with a more delicate charm than most of the others.

office. Now that Jerry (the girls called him the stableboy) was in charge of one of the Anastasia Salons, Stella Riley's morning riding had ceased.

"Say, d'ja notice how English she's getting since she's married to the Stableboy?" contributed Miss Mabel, who plucked eyebrows.

They giggled each in her cubicle. "They say he's younger than her," contributed Miss Sheila, a wide-eyed, snub nosed Irish girl, quite unexpectedly beautiful.

Miss Mabel, the wit, suddenly dissolved into weak laughter. She managed to gasp between shrieks that Ethel Riley's husband (Ethel was the youngest of the Riley girls) in his uniform had looked like a boy glare in Madam's eyes...

At ten-thirty a faint stir as Miss Stella Riley, in a faultless tailleur, swept in, her wide-set cold-blue eyes taking in every detail of the scene. She nodded briefly to the swathed and becreamed customers, who regarded her as curiously and enviably as did the operators.

She had a magnificent carriage, tall, aggressively erect, with the easy stride and swing of the athlete. She stepped through the reception room, passed the affected Miss Irma who whinnied into the phone, into her private office with Miss Riley engraved on a silver nameplate beneath a silver carved horse's head, which was used as a knocker.

A wave of silence followed her progress, but as the door of her office closed behind it, it broke like foam follows a wave on a sandy beach.

"My Lord, you'd think she was Queen of England."

"What glorious skin..."

"I think she's homely. Big Polak type."

"My cousin knows the family well, my dear, they're worth millions."

"Not, they, my dear. Oh, no. That's Walter Riley, the son. He's the sole owner of the shops, I tell you. The sisters work for him."

Miss Nettie, rubbing salve into the scalp before her with steely fingertips, "Oh, boy, is he stunning! But he's worse than the girls. Never notices any of us. They treat us like we was dirt. Why, if we meet them in the street they don't notice us. They don't even greet you in the elevator. That's the Rileys for you!"

(To Be Continued)

smiling, efficient robots yes-ing and no-ing breathlessly at the proper intervals—washing, rubbing, manicuring, marcelling, at fever speed, because the Riley's had "timed" every job and appointments were made in scientific intervals that allowed for no procrastination or prolonged discussion. It was work, work. Quickly, efficiently, carefully and smoothly. Fingers flew; soap sudsy water. Green Venetian blinds discreetly lowered to prevent a

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