

OUT OUR WAY—By WILLIAMS

"The VANITY CASE"

A Tale of Mystery and Love

By CAROLYN WELLS

(Continued From Page 1)

to have much to do with a club in Harbor Park, even to be president of it."

"Yes, I do." Myra admitted. "Let the Harbor Park people take one of their own men for president. We of the Gardens have no call to mix with them to that extent. If Perry chooses to go over there to play golf, because the links are better than the Garden links, let him do so. Let him be a member of the club so he can do so. But as to being president—no."

"All right, old thing," said Heath, amiably. "I'll refuse the candidacy, since it pesters you so. We've been married six years, and I never before saw you so hot up. Give me a light, somebody."

He lazily held a cigarette to his lips, while Bunny picked up one of four lit candles that stood on a refectory table, and held it for his use.

As she put it back, she idly opened a portfolio of sketches that lay on the table. Inside was a card, which said, in elaborate lettering: "The Work of Perry Heath."

"What's this for?" she said, taking it up and closing the portfolio. "Oh, that's a work of art in itself," Heath told her. "There was a loan exhibition here last summer, and that was the card that designated my collection of masterpieces. It is such a gem of Spencerian work, I saved it."

The lettering on the card was ornamented with the old-fashioned Spencerian flourishes, and further embellished with the strange bird of unknown species, with which Spencerians were wont to decorate their pen work.

Bunny laughed at it, and gayly stuck it in the corner of the frame of one of Heath's best sketches that hung on the studio wall.

"All right, then, Perry," Myra said, more mildly now, "you'll withdraw your name from the candidates, and give up the idea of the club presidency?"

"Nobody, my darling, could call me a silly man," sang Heath. "Of course, I will, if your ladyship decrees that. That will leave three names to vote on still. But I doubt if Anderson gets it. Seems to me Pinkie Garrison is a more general favorite."

"Nixy," Inman disagreed. "It's not Anderson, then George Morton."

"Well, they're all Park men," Myra argued. "I don't care which of them is elected, if Perry doesn't run."

"I won't, I won't, I won't!" Heath reiterated. "Now, for Heaven's sake, drop that subject. Come on, let's all go to bed. A spot of Scotch, Larry?"

"Sure. This has been an exhausting conference. Gosh, what a watery concoction! You take this, I'll mix my own."

Inman set back on the table the mild highball Heath had compounded for him, and his eye lighting on the card in the picture frame, he took down and set it up against the tall glass, so that "The Work of Perry Heath" seemed to refer to the Scotch and soda.

CHAPTER III.

With a smile, Heath appropriated the drink. He cared little for whisky, while Inman was rather too fond of it.

Bunny sipped up to Heath, and begged a sip from his glass, while Myra, now apparently reconciled again to the "vamp," herself accepted a portion of Larry's nightcap.

"The dove of peace once more hovers in our midst," Perry said, as he rescued his glass from the ab-sentminded Bunny. He beamed through his shell-rimmed glasses, with the air of a kindly paternal.

"I believe those convex lenses make your eyes look bigger," said Bunny, looking closely into the said lenses.

"A good thing," remarked Myra. "Perry's eyes are all the better for a bit of magnifying."

"I rather fancy my eyes," Heath said, imperturbably. "Awfully good color, what?"

"No color at all," retorted his wife, promptly. "Just commonplace uneventful eyes. Like your hair. Except that you wear it a bit long, there's no character to it whatever."

"I don't wear it long. It's cut as short as Larry's."

"At the back, yes. But you wear it long on top—so you can shake it back with the gesture of an artist."

"That will do, Myra," said Heath, with unusual daring. "Please let my personal appearance alone, will you?"

"Certainly, Perry. It doesn't interest me at all."

Heath stared at her. What was the matter with Myra tonight? She was all on edge for some reason—was it really because of the election question, or was she upset at his attentions to Bunny Moore?

Bunny felt sure it was the latter, and remarking again her intention to wash her hair, she danced out of the room and up the stairs.

"That child is a picture!" said Heath, with the sole and available desire to annoy his wife.

But he didn't succeed, for Myra only said, "Yes, she is," in an abstracted tone that gave the impression of absent-mindedness.

"I'm off for bed, too," Inman declared. "I hope after I leave the room you'll say I'm a picture."

"Indeed we shall," Heath assured him. "There are all sorts of pictures, you know."

"Tep. Good night," Larry said, a little shortly, and swung himself off.

Husband and wife sat silent for several moments, though occasionally glancing at one another.

At last, Myra gave a little sigh, and said, "Blow out the candles, please, they bother my eyes. And put out the lights, too, we may as well go to bed. It's Katie's night out."

Heath slowly blew out the four candles on the table, but delayed turning off the electric switches.

"What ailed you tonight, Myra?" he said, not unkindly, but a trifle accusingly.

"Oh, I don't know," she returned, her pale face showing a slight frown.

"We are so hopelessly mismatched, Perry. Aren't we?"

"We are sure. What would you care to do about it?"

"What can we do? If we could be divorced, I'd marry Larry, of course. I can't see you marrying Bunny, though."

"Probably not—though I might do worse."

"You could easily do worse, and probably would. But it's out of the question. We can't have the awful publicity of that sort of thing—and then your secret would come out—"

"What?"

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about it."

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"I'm a friend of yours, isn't he?" she said. "He said you used to be secretary to him over at Dexter's."

Myra nodded gravely. "Yes—I used to work for him," was all she said.

She wondered if John Manners ever had been a real friend of hers? Would a friend have believed Flossie's absurd lie about herself and

her over at Dexter's?

Myra raised her head, with its coils of shining brown hair, from her typewriter. "Who was that?" she said.

"Jack Manners," he answered, and then, as she said nothing, he went on:

"He's a friend of yours, isn't he?" she asked. She was wildly curious to know about that broken engagement. She had wondered 10,000 times which one of the pair had broken it—Doris or John.

"Well, they've been running along together for years and years," Tuydeman told her. He stopped, and seemed to be turning something over in his mind.

"Way back in high school days, Doris Hing was in love with him,"

"How do you mean—queer?" she asked. She was wildly curious to know about that broken engagement. She had wondered 10,000 times which one of the pair had broken it—Doris or John.

"I thought you were a bachelor girl, too, until today," he said. "But Jack Manners tells me you've been married! May I be very rude and ask you what kind of a widow you are—grass or sod?"

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