

LOVE FOR TWO

RUTH DEWEY GROVES © 1928 By N.E.A. Service Inc.

THIS HAS HAPPENED
BERTIE LOU & ROD BRYER are
happily married, until LILA LOREE plots
to marry Rod, because he is poor. She
meets and marries CYRUS LOREE and
while she gains, Bertie Lou's confidence
by showering her with favors.

Gradually, Bertie Lou's interest
and faith in her wife while she plants seeds
of mistrust about his wife. When
Bertie Lou discovers this, she breaks
other secrets, she is heartbroken and
indulges in the dissipation of idle wives
while Rod is still a good boy.

They drift apart but Rod will not
come to himself to Lila. This infuriates
her and she falls in love with Rod again
in which it appears that he is the thief;
then insists on keeping it secret to save
his honor. Bertie Lou is shocked and
she says she did it to gain his
love.

He repudiates her disloyalty to her
husband, and she repudiates him that his
wife is with CYRUS LOREE. He
drives to the Palmer estate where he
sees Marco and Bertie Lou in lounging
roles. Bertie Lou is shocked and
they were merely coming upstairs from
the swimming pool.

Marco gets home, Rod is
gone, leaving no word, but a check for
\$2,000. Not realizing that he left
because of his suspicion, Bertie Lou denounces
Lila for trying to take him away from her.

Bertie Lou secures a position, and is puzzled
when Rod comes home again. Marco
is in a gay mood with Marco. Then she
thinks of a plan.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER XXXIX

I AM going to build a house."

Bertie Lou said it softly, tremulously, almost under her breath. Her eyes were glowing brightly behind misty tears and a tender half-smile parted her lips. Bessie Rogers thought they would be very pretty lips if they had more color.

She hardly knew what to say to Bertie Lou about the house. It was a trifle embarrassing not to know more than the mere name and occupation of any one who chose to confide in you. Was Mrs. Bryer going to be married? Bertie Lou had wondered about Mr. Bryer. . . . Bertie Lou never spoke of him.

"That's fine," she said. "I'd love to build a house, too."

Bertie Lou turned her head and looked at her. "Do you mind if I ask you a personal question, Miss Rogers?" she asked.

"Please call me Bessie," the other replied. "Miss Rogers sound like the boss calling me down. What do you want to ask me?"

Bertie Lou hesitated. "I was wondering, Bessie," she began reluctantly. "If you had a sweetheart?"

Bessie was quick to reply. "I haven't a steady, if that's what you mean."

"Well, then, it isn't too late for you to start right," Bertie Lou astonished her by saying. "If a man wants to marry you, Bessie, and build a house for you, let him do it—build the house, I mean, even if it's only a portable shack."

She smiled, but there was a touch of earnestness in her tones that told Bessie a story lay behind her admonition.

"Well, I guess I wouldn't be saying no if I cared for the man," Bessie said uneasily, but emphatically. She couldn't understand Bertie Lou. Did she mean a girl ought to marry just to get a home?

"Of course, but some girls want marriage all their own way, Bessie. They don't think much of what the man they're going to marry would like."

"He may want a six-room cottage with all his heart; it may have been his dearest dream to have his own roof and a family under it, but if he's like most men he will let the girl have her way—and they may move into an apartment, or even away from town and . . . if things don't go right, they'll never have that house—not together."

She turned her head and blinked hard on the tears that threatened to spill themselves on her wan cheeks. Bessie was silent because she didn't know what to say, which was the best thing she could have done.

Suddenly Bertie Lou turned back and smiled at her. "I haven't any one to help me build my house," she said, "because I didn't know what it was like to want one with all my heart. But maybe some one else will find happiness in it. That would be nice, don't you think so, to have people being happy in your house?"

"Y-e-s," Bessie replied doubtfully. She thought it would be much nicer to be happy in it yourself. "When are you going to build it?" she added.

"Just as soon as I can get up," Bertie Lou told her. "See here."

She reached down on the foot of the bed for a folded newspaper that lay there. "Here's a whole page ad of a company that's building a lot of houses at Moonfields. Isn't that the loveliest name? I was out there once."

"She paused and took a trembling underlip between her teeth to still it.

She had gone there with Rod, shortly after they came to New York. He'd been deeply interested in the tiny English cottages that were going up like magic—an architect's dream come true. He had succeeded in interesting a wealthy builder in pretty homes at a small cost.

But Bertie Lou had been unable to enthuse over them as Rod did. They were attractive, yes, adorable even. "But so small, you know Rod; how could we entertain? It might be all right for some one whose future is limited, to come out here, but what would the Frasers think if we did?"

Bertie Lou remembered their conversation almost word for word. Rod had reminded her that these houses were larger than the apartment she was looking at.

"But the apartment is only temporary," she had argued. "When you get where you belong in the business world, Rod dear, we will have a house, but it must be in a more exclusive neighborhood than this. And we need a real dining room."

Rod thought it would be cozy to have a table in the living room. "Right before the fireplace, and a nice cheery log fire going."

But they didn't build. And now Bertie Lou enshrined it in her memory. It was the temple of night-have-been.

"See where it says 'small payment down and balance like rent'?" she pointed out to Bessie, who turned over the bed and studied the advertisements with her.

"Gee, what a sweet little home!"

Bessie exclaimed over the picture in the middle of the page. "Is that the one you want?"

"No, but it's the same style. I'm afraid the one I'd like to have is sold, but I'm going to ask the company to build me another one just like it."

Two weeks later she made the request. Marco had come for her and driven her out to Moonfields.

"Isn't there anything I can do to make you even think about marrying me?" Marco pleaded.

"Maybe some day I will if you keep on nagging me," she told him. "It will be your own fault if I do, Marco. You wouldn't get much."

"I'm just a hollow shell. I haven't any heart at all."

"I suppose I haven't any right to request Lady Luck to shoot the whole works on me," Marco mumbled in a philosophic tone. "But I'd rather have been born poor with a chance that you'd love me as my share of good fortune. Believe it or not."

"If you'd ever been poor I might believe it, Marco," Bertie Lou said, "but I can't love you, so you might as well enjoy the blessings you have. Besides, my love never blessed anybody."

"Give it a chance, and see," Marco argued. "You know what the mother said to her reluctant daughter: 'Love will come afterward.'

Bertie Lou did not reply. She was thinking that sometimes love fled afterward. Why not, then, marry without it? If love was not a guarantee of happy married life why bother about it? And was Marco so far wrong when he brought her argument back to her? If she wanted to seek happiness through making others happy, why not begin with him?

Bertie Lou was too honest to stop her in the examination of her thoughts. Marco could make life a great deal pleasanter. Office work was different after you had left it and gone back to it.

Keeping house had been a real job, but at least she'd been able to arrange her hours to suit herself. And what was there at the end of her work now? It had been marriage before. Marriage seen through rose glasses.

She knew more about marriage today. She'd have a greater chance if not for the bliss she had known with Rod, at least for a better understanding with the man she married.

And if she didn't marry? Years and years in a rooming house or a return to her home in Wayville. Rod and Lila would come back, too.

Bertie Lou was sure of that. Lila would make him. Lila would ride her triumph like a high steed. Bertie Lou could feel herself being trampled . . .

She moaned softly and Marco glanced at her in alarm.

"Marco," she whispered, "Marco, I'll do it; I'll marry you."

"You promised you wouldn't begin

(To Be Continued)

OUT OUR WAY

—By Williams

THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

—By Williams

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

—By Ahern

THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

—By Ahern

THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES