

A SUITOR TOO MANY

By Mildred Barbour

LILA LATHAM becomes the bride of HERBERT WARD, but the picture of an old mother, CLETA JACK FARQUHAR, lurks in her mind. She confides her plight to her friend, DOROTHY CLETA JACK FARQUHAR.

While in France during the war, Lila had promised Jack that she would be come back to him. But when she came back from the front, Jack is reported dead, and later his insatiable desire to travel led him to give up his old life as a soldier.

Herbert learns of the gift, and Lila says the money was her uncle's and was given in memory of her son. Several months later, when Herbert comes back from the front, he is reported dead, and is to return to New York that day. She has no money to give him for luncheon. During the meal, Jack asks Lila to marry him.

With the thought of escaping his miraculous escape from death and the circumstances of his return, Lila is laying her plans.

CHAPTER XXV

The Old, Old Story

LILA, sweetheart, why are you crying?" Farquhar implored.

Lila's only answer was to weep more bitterly. They were no false tears; she wasn't thinking of herself now, as she had been, ever since the arrival of Farquhar's cable.

She was thinking, instead, of the imminence of the disaster for Farquhar, for Herbert, for everybody.

Somebody had to be hurt, and desperately. Which one of them should it be?

For a moment she felt that Farquhar, after all his agony, should be spared. But her heart cried out to her to spare Herbert. Or was it to spare herself, because she couldn't live without his love?

Even while she wept, she was reviewing the tangled situation, wondering how to cope with it. She couldn't marry Farquhar anyway, since she was already married to Herbert, so it was Farquhar who must be sacrificed.

She would have to tell him, have to destroy with her own words that dear man had worshipped through all his trouble and suffering.

She opened her mouth to speak, her tears checked now.

But Farquhar, whose hands were again reaching out for hers, said suddenly, sharply:

"Lila, where is your ring?"

She flushed crimson, thinking, for a moment, that he had caught sight of the ring she had slipped from her finger under the shelter of the table-cloth.

"You don't wear it any longer?"

His smile had vanished. He looked very stern.

"Not — not since —" she stammered and stopped.

Here was the time to speak. But Farquhar said:

"Please get it and put it on. We will need it this afternoon. I want it for your wedding ring, as I first intended."

SOMETHING in his voice frightened Lila. She saw him again as the determined young man, who had woosed her so impetuously in those early days of the war, sweeping her off her feet by the very strength of his ardor.

She laughed a trifle shakily.

"How stern you sound! You almost make me afraid of you, Jack."

His face softened.

"You never fear me, Lila, as long as you love only me and never give a thought to another man."

"Isn't that — isn't that rather threatening?" she faltered, trying to smile.

"Perhaps," he shrugged, "but it's the truth. I'd kill the man who tried to take you from me."

"Jack! You frighten me horribly!"

"Do I, sweetheart? But it only goes to prove how much I love you."

Lila's heart was beating suffocatingly. She tried to laugh, as she clasped her hands together tightly, so that their trembling wouldn't be so evident.

The high spot of the play came in Whitehead's lead to the next trick. From the bidding he inferred that Lenz, the declarer, had a double stopper in hearts; therefore it would be possible for Whitehead to establish the suit without giving declarer two heart tricks. These two

"But what would you have done,

cheeks. Maybe she was a very wicked girl — "making up" Pablo Valenda, because she had no real love to boast of to Tony and the other girls, and now lying to Faith and Bob so that she could slip away to meet the real Pablo, who was not an artist at all, not even a "gentleman" just a farm laborer whose only painting was done on a birch tree.

How miraculous that this bit of woods on the Grayson farm should have become in actual fact that "trysting place" of which she had fictionized so romantically to Tony Tarver. The wonder of it still caught at the girl's heart with a delicious pang.

A book of poems by Rupert Brooke lay open face downward on her knees. She had felt the need of poetry lately.

As she waited now, waited with a heavenly certainty that she would not wait in vain, that he was as eager to see her as she to see him, she quoted softly aloud from one of the poems she had been reading:

"I lay and watched the dying light,

Paint the pale high solitudes,

And wash the rain and veiled by night."

Crystal was glad, for the sake of her suit and her health, that there had not been any rain, but otherwise, how beautifully the poem fitted this night and this tryst. She went on quoting.

"And I knew That this was the hour of knowing, and the heart and the woods and you Were one together, and I should find The secret in the silent, the hidden key.

Of all the secret hurt I could feel, Why you were you, and the night was.

And the woods were part of the heart of me."

So much had hurt and puzzled her, Crystal mused. Why, she had been hurt and puzzled since she was 14 years old. When she first had discovered that boys were not attracted to her. Only her mother had understood and had been nuttily sympathetic.

And now her mother was dead.

Tears began to slip down Crystal's

if you had returned and found me married to some one else?"

Her heart almost stopped, while she waited for his answer.

"Done?" he echoed. "Why, simply have shot the chap and made off with you."

Her cry of horror made him smile.

"You've forgotten what a savage I am, haven't you, sweetheart."

"Yes," said Lila, faintly. She had, indeed. She stared at him, wondering how she had ever dared to love so ruthless a young man. Or was it his very ruthlessness that had attracted her? Was that why she had forgotten him, when she was no longer under the spell of his presence?

(To Be Continued)

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Radio Bridge Play Opens

THE winter radio bridge season opened Tuesday with the broadcasting of the first of the series of Work-Whitehead radio bridge games from station WFBM.

An innovation this year was the discussion by Work of the bidding of the radio hand both at auction and at contract bridge, the new form of the game that is becoming so popular all over America. Thus the player who follows the radio games soon will have an enviable knowledge of how to bid successfully at contract.

Participants in the game with Work and Whitehead were two other New York bridge authors and players of note, Sidney S. Lenz and Wynne Ferguson.

The hands were: Work, South; dealer: Spades, 7, 6, 4, 3; hearts, 9; diamonds, K, Q, J, 9, 6, 2; clubs, A, 7, Whitehead, West: Spades, 10, 9; hearts, A, K, 10, 7, 3, 2; diamonds, A, 7, 3; clubs, K, 4. Lenz: North: Spades, A, K, 5; hearts, Q, J, 8, 6; diamonds, 10, 5; clubs, Q, J, 9, 3; Ferguson, East: Spades, Q, J, 8, 2; hearts, 5, 4; diamonds, 8, 4; clubs, 10, 8, 6, 5, 2.

Bidding of the hand, at no score was conventional—one diamond by Work, dealer, South; one heart by Whitehead, West; and one no trump to Lenz, North, who held only two cards of his partner's suit, but had double stoppers in the adverse suit and strength in the remaining two suits.

Ferguson, East, passed, as did also the dealer on the second round. The dealer, Work, did not consider his singleton heart a menace to his partner's no trump, as Mr. Lenz had bid the no trump directly over the adverse heart bid. Moreover Work's diamond suit, with a reentry in the ace of clubs, promised good no trump support.

DECLARER could foresee that his diamonds would be blocked, but figured he could take two tricks, as the holder of the ace would undoubtedly hold it up as long as possible.

Therefore he took his two diamonds, with dummy's king and queen. Whitehead played the 3 and 7; declarer the 5 and 10; Ferguson the 4 and 8.

Declarer now had three tricks, with two more sure tricks in clubs and one in spades in his hand. He could also establish a heart by leading that suit; but he still would lack one trick for game.

An extra trick in clubs was possible by a finesse of the 9. Moreover, if the finesse failed, Ferguson, East, winning the trick with the 10, might make the error of leading another heart, which would give declarer two tricks in that suit and game.

Therefore declarer led the 7 of clubs from dummy; Whitehead played the 4; declarer finessed the 9; and Ferguson won with the 10.

Ferguson, however, was too wily to fall into the net. He read the heart situation from his partner's failure to continue the suit.

He therefore avoided hearts and also the untried spades, and led the 5 of clubs. Dummy played the 2 of diamonds; Whitehead the 2 of hearts; declarer the jack of clubs.

Declarer then led the queen of hearts to establish a trick in the suit before losing control of clubs and spades. Mr. Ferguson played the 4; dummy the 6 of diamonds; Whitehead won with the ace of hearts.

Whitehead led the ace of diamonds; declarer discarded the 5 of spades; Ferguson the 2 of spades; and dummy played the 9 of diamonds.

Whitehead then led the 10 of spades, which declarer won with the king; Ferguson played the 8 and dummy the 3. Declarer led the ace of spades; Ferguson played the jack, dummy the 4, Whitehead the 9.

Declarer then took his good queen of clubs and jack of hearts; Ferguson playing the 6 and 8 of clubs; dummy the 6 and 7 of spades; and Whitehead the 3 and 7 of hearts. Declarer's final lead of the 8 of hearts of course was won by Whitehead's game-saving 10.

Declarer, therefore, scored only 20 points for his two tricks. There was no honor score as aces were easy.

CONTRASTING the new game of contract with auction bridge, Work said that the play of a hand, as a general thing, is the same in both games, and the bidding is not so different as many people suppose.

The inherent difference is that in auction bridge a game may be made, if enough tricks be won, regardless of whether a smaller number were bid; but in contract a game can not be made unless the size of the bid is a contract to go game.

For instance, a declarer bidding two spades and making four tricks would go game in auction bridge; in contract he could score toward game only the two tricks bid. Therefore the bidding at contract is influenced by the desire to bid game if possible.

In this radio hand, therefore, the contract bidding would be one diamond by declarer, the same as in auction; but West would bid two hearts instead of one, to show his partner that he was stronger than a one-heart bid would indicate, and to urge his partner, if North should pass, to jump the two hearts to four if possible.

North, however, would bid three no trumps, a game-going bid he could reasonably expect to make with the help promised by his partner's diamond bid, and therefore justifiable.

North's three no trumps probably would obtain the contract, as neither East nor West have sufficient strength to bid further or double. The play at three no trump in contract would be the same as in auction.

In sudden panic, Crystal sprang to her feet to flee, out just then the soft strains of a guitar, playing a Mexican love song, paralyzed her with ecstasy.

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OUR BOARDING HOUSE

By Ahern

"DON'T ORDER AN MEAT FOR DINNER TOMORROW NIGHT MRS. HOOPLES! — YOUR HUBBIE WEARS ON A HUNTING TRIP. AN' MIGHT BRING HOME A BRACE OF BARN OWLS, — OR A COUPLE OF WEATHERVANE ROOSTERS!"

"ID PLAY SAFE TOMORROW NIGHT WE'LL HAVE BRISKET OF BEEF AND KRAUT! — I RELIED ON HIM ONCE WHEN HE WENT DUCK HUNTING, AND BROUGHT HOME AN ARM-LOAD OF MARSH CAT-TAILS TO PUT IN THE PARLOR CORNER!"

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