

THREE KINDS of LOVE

BY KAY CLEAVER STRAHAN

BEGIN HERE TODAY
ANN, CECILY, and MARY FRANCES FENWICK live with their grandparents. The sisters have been orphans since their mother died. "MOM," known as "ROSLIE," and "GRAND" have long been their caretakers. "MOM" is a widow and is supported by Ann and Cecily's earnings. This year, Ann 28 and PHILIP ECRIDGE, young lawyer, still are postponing their marriage because they have been engaged for so long.

Cecily, 22, is in love with BARRY MCKEE, a young man whom she adores. She refuses to name the wedding date because she can not leave Ann with the care of the house.

Mary-Frances, 15, and still in school, strikes up an acquaintance with JIM HOLLOWAY, a company actor. She meets him secretly on several occasions.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

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"Don't be engaged for a long time," Cecily, 22, is in love with BARRY MCKEE, a young man whom she adores.

"Not for a long time. Things are getting better. It is much more fun and exciting and all to keep things uncertain."

"I am not that exact," Cecily said. "No. I like certainties much better than uncertainties."

Ann thought for a moment before she conceded. "Women usually do, I suppose—or they think that they do. But men hate 'em. Cissy. Before they are married, I mean."

"If they hated them before they'd hate them after, just the same," Cecily argued. "Marriage is a ceremony—not a rebirth. I'd surely be afraid to marry a man I was afraid to be engaged to."

"I don't mean afraid," said Ann. "No, and I don't think you know what you did mean. Do you think Phil hates the certainty of being engaged to you?"

"Phil's different. Still, he is getting sort of—difficult. All he'll talk about, any more, is when we can be married."

Cecily laughed again. "These men who hate certainties," she twitted.

Ann yawned. No one could be expected to believe it, but Ann, yawning, was still beautiful. "Well, we'd best be getting to bed. Oh, yes, I nearly forgot. Marta called you up this evening during dinner."

"Well, what did she want?" Cecily asked viciously. Marta, at the moment, was intolerable.

"I don't know, I'm sure," Ann rebuked with dignity. "Mary-Frances answered the telephone."

Cecily knew too well Mary-Frances' proclivities, informative. Her, "Did she tell her who I was out with?" with its italicized pronouns was a long exclamation, not a question.

"It seems to me that she did; but—"

"Well, what in heaven's name did she do that for?"

"Well, what in heaven's name is the matter with you, Cissy, all of a sudden? I suppose it was a secret. I didn't realize that it was a secret. I didn't."

Cecily sulked before she answered, "I don't care to have my affairs bandied about all over town."

"Nonsense! You and Marta have been friends since grammar school. If you don't trust—"

"I'm not talking about my friends, nor—trusting them. I'm talking about my affairs."

"—"

ANN, with her hand on the door, motioned to be thankful that tomorrow would be Saturday.

"I'm not tired," Cecily denied.

"That is, of anything except gossip."

"Simply because your little sister told your best friend that you were out with Barry, you go off like this, raving about gossip. Are you ashamed of him?"

"I'd be ashamed of myself, Cissy, if I were you. You may think, right now, that Barry is all you need, but he isn't. A man never is. You'll need your girl friends as much as you ever have. More, in some ways."

"Nothing is sillier than to give up your girl friends for a man. You can't drop girls for months, either, and then when you need them, pick them up again."

"Who wants to drop them or pick them up again?"

"I'm just trying to give you some good advice, that's all."

Cecily muttered: "Which you never followed."

"What?" Ann asked.

"Nothing."

"Are you cross with Marta about something? Did Marta—"

"No, I am not."

"You'll wake everybody up, shouting like that."

"I wasn't shouting. You're standing in and half out of the house."

"It's just unheeded. I'd think you'd ask him in or send him off, or anyway hurry a little. Sitting there in front of the house in his car. It looks funny."

Before Ann had finished saying, "Who is sitting where?" Cecily had slid across the dining room floor, remarking, "Hurrah for the one!"

The sun was shining, and the air was sweet, and as she ran down the front steps from the porch, Barry got out of the car and came to meet her.

She thought hazily, "I've never been so happy. This feeling is what people mean when they remember the happiest minute of their lives."

"Barry!" she said. "Barry!" and he gave her both her hands, and he took them and held them.

"Do I look pretty?" he asked anxiously.

She stood back and surveyed him. He was wearing a dark suit that she had not seen him wear before; his necktie was just this side of gaudiness; his hair was slicked too much—she loved its frizziness—his face, especially the short, blunt nose, looked scoured like a little boy's face that has been washed and polished too vigorously.

The darling! He might make a joke of it, but he had, he actually had "dressed up."

"You look grand!" she said.

"I tried so hard," he explained. "But I had to hurry. I thought you might look out of the window any time after 6—I've been here since then."

"Dear—dearest!" My silly little sister says you, but she told me just this minute, Why didn't you come to the door?"

"Afraid. Bashful. It was too early to call."

"Why didn't you honk your horn?"

"Any guy that sits in his car and honks his horn at my girl gets a punch in the nose. May I take you to your office? Won't there be time for a little ride first?"

In her room, as she pulled on her hat and searched for her best gloves, she found herself humming that foolish song of Mary-Frances'.

"TWO SHIRT HOOPLES —"

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