

LEAP YEAR BRIDE



BEGIN HERE TODAY
CHERRY DIXON, pretty 19-year-old daughter of a wealthy family, falls in love with DAN PHILLIPS, newspaper reporter. She quarrels with her father about Dan, jumps with her father on Leap Year, and then to marry her.

They are married and for the first time Cherry finds what it means to be a wife. Her struggles with housework are discouraging. She is friendly with Cherry, who makes handsome MAX PEARSON who also works on the News.

Cherry receives a letter from her mother including a check for \$500. She returns the check because she will not let her keep it. Dan, worried about her, undertakes to write a short story, but becomes discouraged and leaves it unfinished.

Two days later Cherry learns her mother is critically ill. Cherry goes home and at her mother's bedside the father and daughter are reconciled. Mrs. Dixon passes the crisis of her illness and after several days Cherry returns to the apartment. Her father tells her the doctor has ordered Mrs. Dixon to spend several months at the seashore. He asks Cherry to accompany her mother. Cherry refuses and Dixon decides to go home.

The night before they are to depart, he calls on Cherry.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE (Continued)

She bought the saucepans and moved on to the china cabinets.

It was forty-five minutes later when Cherry finally emerged from the store. Both of her arms were filled with bundles. She was conscious that she must be very careful of the dishes.

Her nose and cheeks were glowing, her hat pushed away. The dress that had been fresh when she left home was rumpled and soiled now.

She was tempted to stop in a drug store for a soda, but the bundles dissuaded her.

"If I put them down," she told herself, "I'll never be able to manage them again."

She was on her way to the car stop when a clear, high-pitched voice interrupted her. Cherry turned.

"Why, Gretchen, hello!" "Cherry Dixon! Oh, excuse me—I keep forgetting you're married. Phillips, isn't it? What on earth have you been doing? My dear, I didn't know you! All those packages—"

Cherry's cheeks had been hot before. Now they were flaming. "Shopping," she said. "Some things I wanted in a hurry and couldn't wait to have delivered. But what are you doing downtown on a day like this?"

Gretchen Alden frowned. She was dressed in silk, the color of creme de menthe. Her hat and sandals matched exactly. Not a single strand of her lovely golden hair was out of place.

"Frightful, isn't it?" she asked. "I'm simply melted. But you see, we're leaving for Lake Louise and I had to have some fittings. I'm getting three of the sweetest frocks—"

She described them fluently. Cherry's arms were becoming cramped with her bundles, but there was nothing to do but listen.

"Cherry, my dear, the other girl wound up, 'mother and I are giving a little musical Sunday evening. Awfully informal, you know. That good-looking violinist, Carl Van Dyke, is going to play. Won't you come and bring your husband? I'm dying to meet him!"

"I'll see," Cherry agreed. "I'm not sure what our plans are. Well, I must be on my way."

"Can't I give you a lift?" Gretchen urged. "I'm meeting mother with the car at 5—"

Cherry shook her head. "No, thanks," she said. "I'll call you later about Sunday."

As she rode home (luckily having secured a seat on the street car), Cherry entertained herself with a vision of Dan at one of Gretchen Alden's musicales.

She gave him an amusing version of her afternoon's adventures over the dinner table. Afterward, Dan helped wash and put away the dishes. They were finishing the last of them when there was a knock at the door.

"I'll answer," Cherry said. She crossed the room and opened the door. A moment later she cried, "Why, father—!"

CHAPTER THIRTY
DIXON looked ill at ease. "Good evening," he said. "I didn't find a bell downstairs and the door was open. I hope you don't mind—"

"Of course not," Cherry told him. "only you did surprise me! Come in, won't you?"

He entered the room. There was a moment's awkward pause and then Dan stepped forward. "How do you do, Mr. Dixon," he said. "How do you do?"

The constraint between the two men was evident. Cherry hastened to relieve it. "Here's a chair, father," she said, directing him to the most comfortable one.

It stood near the open window and what breeze there was reached it. "It's been a hot day, hasn't it?" she went on. "Lucky you and mother are getting off so soon."

"That's just what I've come to talk about," Dixon announced. "But you're going, aren't you? You don't mean anything's happened to change your plans?"

Her father shook his head. "No, nothing's happened. But I came to ask once again if you wouldn't reconsider and come with us."

Cherry drew herself up straight in her chair. "I can't," she said. "I'm sorry, but I can't."

Dan was sitting in the shadows at the opposite side of the room. Now he leaned forward. "You didn't tell me anything, about this Cherry," he said. "I didn't know you were thinking of going anywhere."

The girl's cheeks flamed. "I—suppose I forgot to mention it," she said. "Father asked me to go with mother on this trip, but I told him it would be impossible. And now that he's decided to go himself, I'm sure that will be much better."

She turned toward Dixon. "You know you really do need the rest, father," she said. "You're sure you won't change your mind?"

Cherry smiled. "Quite sure," she said. "What do you think of our home here? Isn't it rather attractive?"

The one-room apartment was not at its best. The living room was warm and there were still signs that it recently had served as a dining room.

Dan's hat and coat and a pile of newspapers cluttered the davenport. A faint odor suggested that the neighbors had been cooking cabbage.

Dixon managed a reply that was satisfactory and Cherry explained how they had found the apartment and subleased it.

There was little more talk and then Dixon arose to go. For a moment he hesitated, then said abruptly to Dan, "I'm afraid I was rather hasty the last time we met. Said things I shouldn't have."

"That's all right, Mr. Dixon. I guess I understand how you felt," the older man put out his hand. "I was wrong," he said slowly. "I hope it's not too late to make up for it. You and Cherry must both come out to see us when we're back from this trip."

"Thanks. We'll be glad to," a few moments more and Dixon was gone. Cherry whirled around as the door closed after him.

"You see, Dan!" she exclaimed happily, "father isn't a bit like you thought he was. Oh, I'm so glad he came, even if the place is a sight. Aren't you glad, too?"

"Why—yes, I guess so." "You guess so? Don't you know?" "Yes, of course. Sure, I'm glad. But why didn't you tell me about this trip, Cherry?"

"I did tell you about it, father asking you to go with them? How'd it happen you didn't say anything about that?"

"Oh, I guess it just didn't seem very important," said I couldn't, and that seemed to be all there was to it."

Dan crossed the room and looked out on the night. For several moments he was silent. Then he said, "It isn't too late to change your mind about it, is it?"

"Why, Dan—"

His back was still toward her. His voice went on, calmly and steadily. "I think you're making a mistake, Cherry. I think it would be better if you'd take the trip."

"Yes, yes, I do." "You want me to go?" she repeated in amazement. "Why, Dan, what's come over you? I don't understand—"

He turned and faced her. "There's nothing to understand," he said. "Why should you spend the rest of the summer in a hot, dumpy little place like this when you could be at the seashore?"

manuscript. Thank you for submitting it."

The name printed on the slip was that of a famous magazine. Cherry unfolded the pages. It was Dan's story about Gus, the taxi driver, the story he had started on the rainy Sunday so long ago.

"I finished it," he told her, "while your mother was sick and you were staying with her. I didn't mean to say anything about it unless they took it. Wanted to surprise you!"

"I had another one ready to send if they took this. Well, that can go into the wastebasket!" He reached for the manuscript, but Cherry drew back. "Please!" she begged. "Let me keep it, Dan. I want to read it. Oh, I'm sorry that old editor didn't like it, but you mustn't be discouraged! Maybe the next one will be different."

But Dan was not to be shaken from his gloomy mood. Later, when Cherry had finished reading the manuscript and was glowing enthusiastic about it, he was only half-convinced.

He got the second story, an account of two urchins called before juvenile court, from the desk drawer and she read that.

"They're good!" Cherry insisted fervently. "I don't care what that editor or any one else thinks. These stories are interesting!"

Dan laughed at her enthusiasm, was pleased more than he would admit.

"I like the name of this second one, too," she told him. "Kempy's Crime." How did you happen to think of that? He had called the other story simply, "Night Life."

"Oh, I don't know. Saw some kids in court one day. About half of it's true and the rest I imagined to suit myself."

"Listen, Dan," Cherry said seriously, "no matter what any one else thinks, I know you're going to write great stories some day!"

"And in the meantime we'll go to the poorhouse."

"We certainly will not. Don't you understand, dear, that I'd rather be here with you living just as we are than in the finest hotel in the world with all the money there is if you weren't there?"

He told her she was a very foolish girl and neither of them believed it.

(To Be Continued.)

—By Williams

—By Blosser

—By Crane

—By Small

—By Martin

—By Edgar Rice Burroughs

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

—By Ahern

OUT OUR WAY

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