

LEAP YEAR BRIDE

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REGD. U. S. PAT. OFF.



BEGIN HERE TODAY
CHERRY DIXON, pretty 19-year-old daughter of a wealthy parents, marries DAN PHILLIPS, a penniless reporter after a quarrel with her parents. It is a Leap Year marriage and Cherry does the proposing.

She and Dan move into a cheap apartment, but the neighbors, who are doing their housework, are discouraging. DIXIE SPALDING, movie critic of the News is friendly to Cherry.

Cherry meets handsome MAX PEARSON, a man who makes no bones about his love for her. After several weeks, Cherry's mother becomes seriously ill.

Cherry's mother is too ill to be a reconciliation with her parents.

She felt as though some terrible, chilling force had taken possession of her. She could not speak. She could not move, but sat there staring down at her plate.

Over and over in her brain the words pounded. "Dan—and that woman! Here! Dan—and Brenda Vail!"

It was only a moment, but for Cherry that moment was a lifetime. She raised her eyes then and somehow found her voice.

She said simply, "I'm afraid I can't stay for lunch, Max. A sudden headache—I get them sometimes. If you'll call a cab for me—"

Pearson was all solicitude. If he had noticed the couple so near to him he gave no sign.

He said a few words to the waiter, helped Cherry into her coat and then they were outside on the street.

A taxicab drew to the curb in answer to Pearson's signal. Max would have entered and driven home with her, but Cherry shook her head.

She sank far back against the cushioned seat as the cab pulled out into the street. Blessed relief to be alone!

How the dreary afternoon passed she could not have told. She reached the apartment, climbed the stairs. Huddled in a little heap on the davenport she lay staring across the room.

Cherry did not weep. She did not even try to think. The ache in her heart—the ache that twisted and flayed and tortured her—was like a physical pain. It was so new and so terrible.

The gray kitten climbed to the davenport, nestled beside Cherry and waited for caresses that did not come. Sunshine faded from the patches of sky outside the living room window.

Footsteps sounded on the stairs and then died away. In the apartment overhead a radio orchestra played a brassy "torch song."

The whole situation was apparent now to Cherry. Oh yes! She had been blind not to see it before. Dan's sudden coldness. His frequent absences. How could she have failed to understand what was happening?

Still Dan Phillips was nowhere in sight.

CHERRY searched eagerly from left to right. The crowd swirled past and new faces came into view constantly. It was after 12:30.

Cherry took her post directly beside the library entrance and decided to wait there. The alarming possibility came to mind that in this crowd she might miss Dan.

She never had failed to meet him before. Today of all days that would be a calamity!

She stood on tiptoe peering over the crowd. Nobody seemed to notice her and she felt as though she were at the center of a merry-go-round.

The men and women hurrying past might have been carried by some mechanical force.

Twelve thirty-five, 12:40, 1 o'clock. There were fewer pedestrians now. Cherry's eyes were dark with alarm. "I should have reminded him!" she told herself. "I should have telephoned."

Still she would not give up hope that Dan would come.

It was twenty minutes after 1—almost an hour past the time she and Dan were to meet. Cherry raised one hand and brushed the mist from her eyes.

No use to wait longer. No use to hope again that the next moment would bring him. He wasn't coming. He had forgotten about her.

Suddenly Cherry felt a hand on her arm. She whirled, her face lighting with happiness. "Oh—!" she exclaimed and her lips moved to form Dan's name.

But it wasn't Dan Phillips who smiled down at her. Max Pearson stood there. He said easily, "Hall, stranger. Where've you been keeping yourself?"

Cherry's reply was a confused murmur. She heard Pearson speak again, without knowing what the words were.

She heard him say something about him and was surprised to find himself walking down the street beside her, entering the dining room of the Hotel Wellington.

They sat at a small table. Cherry turned her head and suddenly her eyes focused on a figure across the room.

For a moment the figure blurred and the room swam before her. Then the outlines steadied themselves. It was—oh, it WAS!

HORIZONTAL

1 Size of paper.

5 Mineral spring.

8 Decayed tooth.

12 Herb.

13 Snaky fish.

14 Emanation.

15 By way of.

16 Raw Chinese silk.

20 Any tribunal.

21 Source.

22 Rises in blisters.

24 Form of nimbus.

26 Soaks max.

28 Biographical incidents.

32 Speedster.

34 Silk worm.

35 Who resigned his position.

36 As head of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation?

37 Marble used as shooter.

38 Yields.

40 Workbags.

43 Rain in winter.

Dan was sitting at a table not a dozen yards away, leaning forward in earnest conversation, and the woman facing him was Brenda Vail.

Dan's gaze. He must hate her to look at her that way!

"All right," Dan said evenly. "Suppose I was at the Wellington. Suppose I did lunch with Brenda. Is there anything criminal in that?"

Cherry spoke as though she had not heard him. "All these nights," she said slowly, "when I thought you were at the office—special assignments—extra work—you were with her then, weren't you? You've been seeing her for weeks."

"Why didn't you tell me the truth? Why didn't you say you didn't love me any more? Why did you have to lie—?"

"Wait a minute!" Phillips interrupted. "You haven't any reason to complain and you can't say I lied. I did work on a story today until 1 o'clock."

"If you wanted to know where I've been spending my evenings why didn't you ask? You haven't seemed much interested in anything I've done for a long while."

Tears filled the girl's eyes. She tried to brush them away. "You lied to me!" she went on, chokingly. "You lied today, and you've probably done it before."

"And I tell you I didn't lie! You haven't made things any too agreeable around here lately. All your talk about not having any money and how hard you have to work!"

"That's pleasant to listen to, isn't it? Brenda understands—"

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

FOR an instant Cherry thought the words would not come. Her hands, twisting together and hidden by the table, were like ice.

She felt as though some terrible, chilling force had taken possession of her. She could not speak. She could not move, but sat there staring down at her plate.

Dan begins to spend most of his evenings at Miss Vail's apartment. Dixie and Dan are in love again. Dan and Cherry do not allow themselves to be seen together, however. MR. AND MRS. DIXON depart seeking another home to improve their health.

BRENDA VAIL, maid, writes to Dan. Wellington and Dan meets her. She asks him to collaborate in writing a story.

GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER FORTY-ONE (Continued.)

Cherry promptly forgot about the fur coat. Two young men were crossing the street and for a moment she thought one of them was Dan. He wasn't. The youth turned his head and she saw him.

She asks him to meet her Saturday noon. Dan does not come. Max Pearson has dinner with Cherry to lunch. She sees Dan with Brenda.

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CHAPTER FORTY-ONE (Continued.)

Cherry's mother becomes seriously ill.

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