

## The Girl Who Had No Chance

By MARION RUBINCAM

### DISILLUSIONMENT.

Chapter 88.

That night, lying in her luxurious little bedroom at the hotel, Ruth thought over the things said during the evening.

Parts of the conversation came back to her—she could not sleep, and gave it up once, turning on the reading light on the tiny table and hunting through her suitcase for a book to read. But even this she gave up, having no interest in the pages, so she turned out the light and lay looking into the dark and thinking.

Tim had digested a bit with the evening paper, once he opened it, but catching a look from Myra, he laid it down—like a well-trained husband.

"Do read it," Ruth begged him, "then Myra and I can talk. The war news has been a little more cheerful the last few days. I felt last week as though I had to go over myself and take a hand, things seemed so desperate."

"I wasn't reading the war news," Tim answered, perhaps a little sulky because Myra had forbidden him to read. "There's a boxing match on, they are training, and I was just wondering how Joe the Hitter was coming on."

"He might read the war news and improve his mind," Myra answered, puckering up her lips with a little air of virtue.

"It's not our war," Tim answered easily. "And we will never get into it. Why worry?"

"I think it is our war, though," Ruth answered thoughtfully, "and I am not so sure we won't get into it. Most of the things we are making in the factories already built, are for the war, and we are planning things on an extensive scale—because, though we are only making for foreign governments now, we may have to make for our own."

"Well, you won't catch me going it we do get into it," Tim answered, cheerfully, opening the evening paper to the sporting page. "Anyway, they won't ask me because I have a wife and a large and husky son to support. Haven't I?" He leaned over from his

chair toward Myra and kissed her, and she smiled back into his face—the bland, sweet smile that made her so very pretty.

Ruth felt as though something had cut her sharply—it was not the kiss she felt badly over, she thought later as she lay thinking about the evening, it was Tim's new attitude towards life.

She and Langley had followed the news of the day with eagerness. Langley brought up to her letters addressed to him from foreign governments, and when a French officer in his smart horizon blue uniform had come to look over some work for his government, it was Langley's greatest joy to go about with him. They had a map of the battlefields and stuck little pins in to show where the armies advanced and retreated—this occupied all of a small table in the living room at home.

How could Tim ignore it, she wondered?

"Just exactly what are you doing with these new buildings?" Myra asked. "Mother says you are a stenographer for them. You always did want to be one, you know."

"I'm not exactly a stenographer," Ruth answered, wondering how she could begin to explain her ideas, her accomplishments, her dreams and ambitions, where there was so much to tell about them.

"You see," she began again, thinking she might start at the beginning and make it understandable to Myra—"You see, when I got home from New York before, I was a little lonesome, nothing seemed to happen in Marketown."

"I should think you would be lonesome in that hole," Myra broke in contemptuously, "especially as you ran around so much in the city."

Ruth remembered how practically all the good times she had had before were due to Gaby and not to Myra, but she said nothing.

"So I started a club—just our old crowd, and a few other nice people, and we gave a dance and formed some committees."

"Yes, the Towne Club, mother wrote about it," Tim said.

"The club went along splendidly. Then I had an idea about turning a vacant lot by a factory into a place for the factory children to play, because those streets are so dirty and there are so many loaded trucks going through, there are often accidents."

"You were working in the factory," Tim put in again.

"Yes. Then I had an idea we might turn the vacant lots in Marketown into playgrounds for all the children. In other words, give them a place away from the streets, with play things, swings and gymnastic apparatus, and a woman to teach them organized play. And I thought we ought to have a park for grown-ups—one of the children's play grounds, with band concerts—something pretty in the center of the town."

"It needs something decent looking," Myra interrupted.

"So to get that the club formed a Civic committee. I was a member of it. Well, we got those, and did a lot of good things for the town. Then the club drew older members because it was doing serious work, and we bought the old Haines farm and use it now as a summer place, as a country

club—and then I got interested in making good-looking houses for factory people—and there was a man in the town who knew a lot about it."

She did not mention Langley's name, but went on—

"So we took the old flat fields over the river, the city got some, I bought some, but not much, as I hadn't any money, and we floated a bond issue, and—well, we began building model houses. Myra, you should see them. We built the houses in artistic styles round a hollow square; they are so pretty to look at and they don't cost much more. Inside the square it is like a garden and all the people share it."

She stopped. Myra looked plainly bored; Tim was glancing stealthily at the sporting page of his paper.

Tomorrow—Details.

## Heart Problems

Dear Mrs. Thompson: I am a man forty years of age, living here. I have been going with a widow seven or eight years. Would it be advisable to marry or stop keeping company with her? I love her and don't know whether to marry or wait. She thinks a great deal of me, I am sure. Please advise me what to do. J. M. S.

I think you should marry the lady. After going with her so many years it would not be fair to her to drop her. Besides, you say that you love her and marriage seems the natural outcome of love.

Dear Mrs. Thompson: I am a girl of eighteen. I am very much in love with a boy of twenty, but he doesn't seem to care for me at all. He comes to my home often to see my brother

and he talks to me sometimes. He doesn't go with any other girls. Please tell me how to win his love. ANXIOUS BLONDE.

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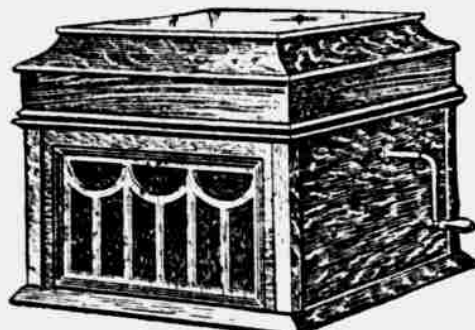
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