

The Middle Ground

By MARION RUBINCAM

AMBITIONS.

Chapter 50.

But Dick's persistence obtained its reward at last, as persistence is apt to do. When the plate of sandwiches was eaten and the coffee had been drunk, Mrs. Talbot carried off the dishes to wash them in the kitchen, and Amy let Dick stay with her in the living room. Strange to say, these late evening feasts had no effect upon this healthy girl, she could drink hot coffee at any hour of the night, and still go to sleep the moment she touched the pillow. It was Mrs. Talbot who had to be careful.

"I don't want you to be a domestic sort of wife," Dick began, anxious to remove the bad impression he felt he had created. "I don't want to see you work. You know that. I used to hate seeing you wash windows and cut grass and such things at home."

"You never thought a thing about it," Amy answered, quite truthfully. "You have always seen girls work, and women work, and you just took it for granted that all of them did the jobs I was doing. You never even thought about me except that I had red hair and you hated the color."

There was silence, while Dick searched for an excuse for all this which was, in fact, perfectly true. Dick always took a little time to answer, but when he did, slowly and thoughtfully, the answer was to the point.

"I was an awful fool then; I was not in love with you," he began, the

two statements coming out as one sentence, so closely were they connected in his mind. "I don't see how I could have helped but be in love with you, even then, but I wasn't. I am now—and it makes everything different."

"Even red hair?" This was a sensational statement from Dick. "But if you marry me you won't have to work. They are training me for the assistant managership of our department. I will get it when I know a little more Spanish." Dick, catching the spirit of work, had been taking night courses in languages and export trade. "That pays \$30 a week. And that is only the beginning."

The boy's slow, quiet way of talking carried conviction, even to the perverse girl. It was the same convincing trick of speech that caught the attention of one of the influential men in the firm the boy worked for, and that had gained his recent promotion. "We will be married when I am making \$50 a week," Dick went on. "You can have a fairly nice flat for that, and a maid, so you won't have to work. Even if I don't make money, I will inherit a little from father. And I will be a rich man some day. I know it. But it would be fun to start poor, with a little place—and to have you looking after things at home."

His eyes were glowing at the idea. But Amy was untouched.

"It would be wonderful—if I were in love with you that way, Dickie,"

she said, her own tones serious for the moment. "But I am not. You have a certain sweet girl in mind, and you want to marry her, but I am not the girl. You aren't in love with me; you only think so."

Dick's short laugh was a most effective denial.

"You don't know me at all. You say you will be rich—but you don't know my ideas of being rich. You don't know how fearfully, terribly extravagant I want to be. I want not a flat nor a house, but lots of houses, and motors, and jewels, and gowns—the wonderful sort of gowns that look so simple the ordinary person doesn't notice them, but that cost fortunes! I want heaps of people to dinner, all the biggest people of the day, and parties and dinners, and long trips—I want a lot." She turned her face toward Dick, her features alive with animation, as she lived for an instant in the world she had built for herself.

"You couldn't give me all that, not until we were too old to get much fun out of it," she went on. "If I were in love with you unselfishly, as you are with me, this other would not count, and I should adore tying on gingham aprons and making Sunday night supper when the maid went out."

"As it is, I have to marry a rich man, or else, I have to make a name for myself as a singer, so all these people will invite me places, and I can live the sort of life I want, as a guest of people who have money." She paused, leaning back in her usual position in the big chair and surveying her victim with a certain humorous sympathy. Dick seemed to sink lower on the couch as his spirits went down.

"So you see, I am just hard and sel-

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Senorita Rita Gomez Colon, daughter of the wife of President Cayas of Cuba, is engaged to marry Senor Guillo Colli, according to word from Washington. She is one of the most popular figures in the younger social set there.

fish to the core. I'm simply a good sport about it, and perfectly honest. I won't make your life unhappy, as I would if I married you; I will leave

you free for some other girl who is nicer than I am. I am going to try to get what I want; I am willing to work hard for it—either by trying to be a great singer, or a decent wife to whichever man I marry. I will be that anyway—a good sport."

An undertone of tragedy was in her voice. Dick said nothing, but got up. Amy thought he was going, and rose, too. His answer was simply to put his arms around her and kiss her—to kiss her with a fire and longing that left her helpless with astonishment. "Don't do that, Dick," she begged, frightened at herself and at him. "Don't—make it hard to do."

Tomorrow—Luther's View.

Heart Problems

Dear Mrs. Thompson: I had a Christmas eve party at my house and the house was all trimmed with holly and mistletoe. Of course we girls tried to keep out of the way of it, but

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sometimes we would forget. One time I got under it by mistake and one of the boys jumped up and kissed me. His girl didn't like it very well. Do you think I ought to apologize to her and tell her I did not do it on purpose?

MOLLY O. Say nothing about the kiss. The sooner it is forgotten the happier you and your girl friend will be.

Dear Mrs. Thompson: My boy friend gave me his picture framed for a Christmas present. I would like to keep it very much. Would it be correct to do so?

RUTH. Keep the picture. It would be rude to return it.

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50 Cloth Coats	Value to \$49.75	\$25.00
50 Cloth Coats	Value to \$65.00	\$39.75
20 Misses Plush Coats	Value to \$25.00	\$ 9.75
15 Sealette Fur Trimmed Coats	Value to \$75.00	\$34.75
20 Extra Size Plush Coats	Value to \$65.00	\$34.75

Skirts

50 Wool Serge Skirts	Value to \$9.75	\$ 3.98
25 Wool Serge Skirts	Value to \$12.50	\$ 5.00
50 Plaid Wool Skirts	Value to \$12.50	\$ 6.75
50 Plaid and Stripe Wool Skirts	Value to \$15.00	\$ 7.98

Waists

100 French Barred Dimity Waists....	Value to \$2.98	\$ 1.98
100 Silk Canton Crepe Blouses	Value to \$9.75	\$ 5.00
100 Tailored Crepe de Chine Waists.....	Value to \$8.98	\$ 5.00
50 Silk Pongee Waists.....	Value to \$5.98	\$ 3.98
50 Canton Crepe Overblouses.....	Value to \$17.50	\$10.98

Phoenix Silk Hosiery

100 pairs Silk Hosiery, all colors and sizes, quality 365, value \$1.25

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100 Sateen Petticoats

Petticoats in plain colors and figured, elastic, belts, values to \$2.98

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Silk Stripe Confiner

5 dozen Bust Confiners, color pink, all sizes 32 to 40, value 89c

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20 Raincoats, in good styles for utility or motor wear, values \$19.75

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20 Cloth and Silk Dresses..	Value to \$49.75	\$25.00
20 Cloth and Silk Dresses..	Value to \$75.00	\$39.75
5 Velvet Dresses.....	Value to \$79.50	\$39.75

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10 Misses Cloth Suits	Value to \$25.00	\$13.75
25 Women's Tailored Suits	Value to \$89.75	\$25.00
10 Women's Tailored Suits	Value to \$89.75	\$39.75
5 Women's Tailored Suits	Value to \$125.00	\$59.75

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1 Australian Seal Coat ...	Value to \$150.00	\$ 79.50
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4 Near-Seal Coats	Value to \$295.00	\$165.00
3 Hudson Seal Coats	Value to \$495.00	\$275.00
2 Natural Muskrat	Value to \$250.00	\$142.50