

Supplying Him With Confidence

By Joella Johnson

AS she walked around the picnic grounds with her sweetheart, Jerry Collins, Lydia could not but envy the other girls their prosperous look. And many of them had gone off and got married since she had graduated from high school, she reflected. Yes, there was Mary Cummings with her husband and Molly Grey with Leon, whom she would marry in September—all seeming prosperous and happy—except herself.

Her eyes unconsciously wandered to her sweetheart. Jerry, who was walking by her side. She eyed him affectionately, then a little frown of anxiety gathered over her eyes as she looked him over. Jerry all unconscious of the scrutiny.

"I don't know what it can be, Lydia," he said, going on with the conversation which she had brought up, as usual. "I guess it's just luck with those fellows, or fate or something. I've done my darndest to make old Durham see I'm worth more money, but he don't give it to me."

"Maybe he's right," said Lydia, a little reflectively. "If a man is worth more he will get it, and if he doesn't he ought to leave and make some other

firm realize his worth," she said conclusively.

"But, Lydia—leave—why—it's preposterous—suppose I couldn't get another job—and suppose I was out of work for a long time?"

His refusal was cut short by Anne Richardson, who sauntered up to them with her fiance.

"Meet Miss Manning and Mr. Collins," Anne said, as she introduced Lydia and Jerry, and then turned off with Lydia, while Mack Rankin, her fiance, opened a conversation with Jerry. When the two girls had sauntered toward a rugged bench down the side lane just off the midway Anne said: "You know we're going to be married next month. I've really been engaged six months, but we haven't announced it until Mack got on his feet. He has a dandy place now, and so we're ready to take our chance."

She smiled pleasantly at the realization of Mack's success and Lydia tried to reflect the enthusiasm. But deep down in Lydia's heart her own disappointment cut all the deeper.

There must be some way to put Jerry on his feet Lydia said to herself. Then the thought struck her to confide her trouble in Anne.

When she was through talking Anne confidence without having to—won't nodded understandingly. "I know," he get all the more credit for it!"

Lydia had been gazing idly about, her spirits a little low at the nebulous prospect, when suddenly Anne uttered a little exclamation of enthusiasm.

"I've got it, Lydia," she said, "I've got it, scheme—Jerry's got to start

things for himself without being

in on his plan. He can have no lean-

ing post—it's a hindrance rather than

an asset."

"Suppose," she began in a confiden-

tal whisper, leaning closer to Lydia,

"suppose I play fortune-teller and tell

him some inspiring things. I'll make

him believe they're true, and he'll

bank his future moves on them."

"Great," agreed Lydia, enthusiastically.

"Nothing like trying everything

on the calendar," and they fell to dis-

cussing details of the impromptu plan.

An hour or so later Lydia, a bright-

er sparkle in her wide blue eyes than

she had ever had for weeks past,

sauntered in a supposedly aimless

gesture down the midway of the pic-

nic grounds.

"Look, Jerry," she said, suddenly

pointing to the red and yellow gypsy

fortune-teller sign over a little table

behind a clump of trees; "let's go in

here and have our palms read." Then as she moved closer to the little cove she exclaimed eagerly: "It's Madame Paula, the great Egyptian palmist, she's a wonder! Only a year ago she told Ralph Le Bonne's fortune—and see—didn't it all turn out as she predicted?" Lydia asked eagerly.

"All right, Lydia," Jerry agreed pleas-

antly: "I'll go in to her, but I doubt—"

They were into the cove before he finished his pessimistic thought. The Egyptian witch, swathed in gay colors with a heavy mantle over her head and a scarlet veil across her dark features, sat in deep meditation as they entered timidly.

"I must tell the gentleman first and in private," Madame announced, and she dismissed Lydia with a wave of her hand.

One hour later Jerry, a new spring-

one to his step, emerged from be-

hind the trees where Madame Paula

had established her palm-reading par-

lor. He had time to think it all over

while Lydia had hers read.

"She's great!" he exclaimed, slap-

ping his hands together as they walk-

ed away a little later: "simply great!"

"He's done it, Lydia," Jerry said,

smiling. "He's realized I'm worth

more—at last, and he's given me a

ten dollar increase this week. After

the latent executive power I'd gone about things and seen what

he really could do I took some new

ideas to him. Told him I'd get another

place if he didn't come across—and he

did."

Lydia was congratulating him when

he took her in his arms and whis-

pered: "It's all because of you, little

girl; and now it's time to mutually

share our spoils of the battle won."

Within three weeks the idea of Jer-

ry's initiative power had completely

obsessed him. He had made great

strides in the office under its influence.

It was Jerry who had taken it upon

himself to have all the office furniture

moved to further efficiency. Then he

had executed a working plan to stimu-

late old accounts. He knew all the

time he had it in him, and now he was

confident he would succeed, he argued

as he went about his work. Wasn't

success written in every line of his

palm?

Lydia was delighted to hear it, then

quite unprepared for the news, one

evening Jerry brought to her.

"He's done it, Lydia," Jerry said,

smiling. "He's realized I'm worth

more—which he built his fortune.

The Best Surprise of All

By Abner Anthony

THERE certainly was a jam in the subway tonight, Mary Ann.

The speaker was a rather frail young girl, and about 20. Her eyes showed the strain characteristic of those who work under the electric light in the business offices and stores of a large city.

"Well, never mind, Lucy, dear," said Mary Ann, tenderly.

"Only a couple of months more, so stick it out, girlie."

A half hour later found Lucy in her tidy kimono and house slippers. Mary Ann was serving the salad before Lucy offered further comment.

"Gee, but I feel lots better since I ate. Tell me, Mary Ann, didn't you ever want to get married? Every time Joe eats here he always says that some man missed a good wife when he missed you."

In answer to this volley of questions the older woman smiled, perhaps a bit sadly, but she merely said, "Who'd marry an old lady like me, child?"

"Get into your pretty white dress and slippers. In half an hour Joe will be ringing the hall bell and you won't be near ready unless you hustles."

Mary Ann was perhaps nearer 50 than 40. Unmistakably, in her day, she must have been a beauty. Even now, her iron gray hair was remark-

ed for its lustrous beauty. But her soft brown eyes told the world that hidden somewhere in their bottomless pools there was a memory, perhaps a great sorrow.

No one that Lucy knew had ever been able to wrest from her lips the cause of the sadness in those eyes.

Five years before Mary Ann met Lucy Aldridge in Kemptner Company's department store. Mary Ann was a buyer for the waist department. Lucy had started to learn the great business of "selling" waists.

Lucy came from the American melting pot, the East Side of New York. Her parents, needing her financial assistance, however slim, sent her to work in the store almost as soon as she graduated from school.

A hard winter and a slim purse saw both of Lucy's parents carried off to the land beyond the sun during an epidemic of pneumonia.

For years Mary Ann had belonged to mother a girl like Lucy. She was not a rich woman, but she had a modest little four-room apartment, a good salary and unbounded affection.

And so Lucy came to live with Mary Ann.

"Where's that ever-white gone, Mary Ann?" shouted Lucy from the tiny bathroom. "My slippers are a sight. Why, here it is—booh that I am—right behind the talcum can."

"Are you all right now, Lu?" said

Mary Ann, hurrying toward the bathroom. "I'll be sure you look just right and then I'll run over to Jake's and get some cheese for the rarebit."

Mary Ann was gone but a few moments when the door bell rang. It was Joe.

Lu's heart began to flutter as she captured the last of her stray hairs with an "invisible" before opening the door.

"Lu"—and Joe Wallingford crushed Lu in the embrace characteristic of a big-hearted lover.

When Lu disentangled her hairs from Joe's coat buttons she flushed deeply, for standing behind Joe was another man.

"Lu," stammered Joe, "this is my uncle, dad's brother."

They were seated in the tiny gray-blue living room before Joe continued.

"You see, Uncle Ned is an old batch," said Joe playfully. He came in this morning from Brazil. Dad's been showing him the town today and to-night I just made him come along to see the dearest little girl in the world!"

Lucy blushed deeper.

"I can not tell how happy I am to meet the young lady of my nephew's choice, and to tell him how fortunate as you are tonight."

"We should love to hear your love story," interrupted Lucy, ever anxious for a bit of romance.

"I'll tell it to you," said Wallingford.

as he drew the sedan toward the couple.

"A little over twenty years ago I loved a woman with all my soul. Although I was but a poor boy, I managed to save, by the strictest self-denial, enough for a modest little home.

And then I asked the woman to share it with me.

For months we planned. As I look back, I can still see the playful smile in those soft brown eyes as she planned where each little household treasure should go."

"Why, Uncle Ned, there's tears in your eyes," said Joe. "Why, what happened?"

"Well," said Wallingford, "our wed-

ding was just a month off, when a ly-

ing tongue destroyed forever her hap-

iness and mine. She sent back my ring, refused to see me, and broken-

hearted, I left my native land."

"Gee, but look at the money you've made, Uncle," said Joe whose ability as a money maker was somewhat be-

low par.

"Money is quite an empty asset when there is no loved one to enjoy it," re-

marked Wallingford, as he reached for the gold cigarette case in his pocket.

"Miss Aldridge, if you don't object, I'm going to ask Joe to go to the corner and get his old uncle a pack of coffin nails."

Like a father caresses a long lost child, so this man coaxed to con-

sciousness the woman he had loved and lost.

Mary Ann opened her eyes and could scarcely realize that she was really in Ned's arms.

"Is it you, Ned darling—is it really you? How can you ever forgive me?"

"You were gone only two years when she confessed to me on her death bed that she lied about me. She said she loved you and could not see you marrying me."

Ned crushed her to him and then he tenderly said: "But dead folks can't see, Mary Ann—and, besides—I'm very rich now."

And in another month a store lost two workers instead of one, and the ticket chopper in the subway missed two pleasant faces from the daily stream of those who do their best all along the line.

Geographically Speaking.

Two Tommies went into a restaurant over on the eastern front and said to the waiter: "We want Turkey with Greece."

The waiter replied: "Sorry, sirs, but we can't serve."

"Well, then get the Bosphorus."

The boss came in and heard their order and then said: "I don't want to Russia, but you can't Roumania."

So the two Tommies went away

Hungary.

A Disguise That Worked

By Elsie Endicott

IF you will only let me see him I'll promise not to be engaged to him," pleaded pretty Marjorie Benton, "but I don't think he is being considerate."

Marjorie and her maiden aunt, Louise Montgomery Benton, were standing near the wide colonial windows of their home in Georgia.

Mommy Lou, as Marjorie affectionately called her from babyhood days, looked across the green lawn meditatively, then her searching eyes rested on little Marjorie at her side.

"You know, child, you are of Southern aristocratic blood, and Jack Fuller, as you call him, comes from the peasantry of our land. You simply could not marry him and be happy. He's so well, I