

SANDRA THE JEALOUS

By Jane Phelps

SANDRA RESENTS BARRETT'S ATTENTIONS TO ROSE

CHAPTER XLVII.

At eleven o'clock I excused myself and ordered a little supper served. Oh, how I enjoyed it! I don't mean the supper, although that was dainty and delicious, but the freedom—the feeling that I was doing as I wanted, just as Leola had done.

Yet in spite of my pleasurable evening, regardless of my being for once able to do as I pleased, even to wearing my hair high. I had a distinct feeling of annoyance. I realized that Rose had been more than nice to Barrett—that she had made what we girls at home used to call 'a dead set for him.'

My wish that they would marry had vanished. It now seemed to me no desirable. I cannot explain why I felt this way; I made no attempt to analyze the change. And when Barrett left I was delighted that he held my hand longer than he did Rose's and seemed to feel more regret at parting with me than with her.

"Isn't he the dearest thing!" Rose exclaimed. "And didn't we have a perfectly lovely time? It is wonderful to be able to entertain as you can. Do you know if I knew him very well I should call him Barry. I think it just suits him."

"Call you 'Barry'?" I asked, pretending ignorance.

Barrett Edmonds, of course. How long have you known him?"

"Almost ever since I have been married."

"Don't see how you have kept from falling in love with him. I couldn't have helped it. He is stunning. And such a voice! You sing very well together, but it is always more pleasure for me to listen to a man sing than it is to a woman."

"Thank you," I replied drily.

"Oh, don't get nifty! I always like to hear you sing. But it is different to hear a man—a young handsome man like Barrett Edmonds. He thrills one."

I changed the subject. Really I was becoming quite annoyed. Rose certainly was talking nonsense. She must be reading more novels than we did when we used to read together.

It was late before we went to sleep and so remained in bed later than usual. After breakfast we took another ride and did a little shopping. Rose's father had supplied her liberally with money, and she spent it freely.

I wanted terribly to impress her still further by taking her to one of the smart restaurants to luncheon, but I didn't dare. Everett was sure to hear I had been there with Mrs. Sloane, and perhaps be angry. Although he liked her and she was one of our set. He would be much more likely to be angry if I went with Rose, especially if we had no chaperon. Rose was just as young looking as I was, and he had told me that even if I were married I looked too young to go to such places unchaperoned.

We spent the afternoon in the shops, after we had lunched at home. About 5 o'clock, just as we were dressing for dinner, the telephone rang and Barrett Edmonds asked us to go to a play.

For a moment I didn't know what to say. Then came the thought: "Leola would not hesitate—not if she wanted to go." And I wanted desperately to go. So I replied:

"We will be delighted as we had made no plans for the evening."

After telling me he would call for us at 8 o'clock, he hung off and I flew into the guest room to tell Rose.

"Isn't it wonderful that he likes me so well!" she said. "I think he is just splendid; and he must like me to ask us out with him tonight after spending the entire evening here last night. If you weren't married I might think it was you he was trying to please, but of course it couldn't be you. Young men don't pay attention to married women, unless it is because they are mixed up in business with their husbands."

I thought "Perhaps they don't at home," but I said nothing. I didn't want to quarrel with Rose. She was my guest. But the way she appropriated Barrett was too silly. Why he had scarcely seemed to look at her!

I took great pains with my toilet, as much as if Everett were going with me. I was very well satisfied when I had finished, and Rose too looked lovely. I felt glad to have her look so nice because she was visiting me, and I didn't know who would see us. But I would have been just as well pleased had she not been quite so attractive—because of Barrett.

This was all very childish, but I was little more than a child, although I made pretense of being blase to Rose.



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AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE AWAITS SANDRA

CHAPTER XLVII.

Rose gushed abominably when Barrett called for us. She was so effusive in her thanks, taking all the honor of the invitation to herself in a way that really mortified and annoyed me.

Barrett complimented me, looking unutterable things with his eyes, then turned and said:

"If I may be so bold upon short acquaintance, may I tell you also how charming you look, Miss Grandon?"

"Thank you, a woman is always delighted to be told she is charming," Rose replied, dropping a little curtsy, and smiling at him in what she probably supposed was an irresistible manner. For a moment I felt almost sorry I had asked Rose to visit me. Then I remembered that were she not there I would not be able to get out with Barrett Edmonds.

We laughed and chatted all the way to the theatre and between the acts. Barrett never left us, although the men all about seemed scarcely able to wait to go down the moment the curtain rang down. Everett never did so, and it pleased me that Barrett remained with us.

The play was delightful, a society drama full of laughs. I enjoyed every minute of it. Barrett sat between us, and was perfectly impartial in his attentions. I saw several people I knew, who bowed to me.

"What lovely looking people you know," Rose said to me.

"That was Mrs. Sloane. A friend of Mr. Edmonds also," I explained. "I know she is wondering who you are."

"She is beautifully dressed."

"Yes, she is one of the best dressed women I know. Everett admires her."

"Did you ever see such a devoted wife?" Rose asked, as she turned to Barrett. "If her husband admires anything it is perfectly all right with Sandra."

"She certainly is a devoted wife. And Mr. Graham has exquisite taste," he replied with a meaning glance at me—a glance which I could not fail to interpret, although it had passed over Rose's head.

After the play Barrett urged us to go to supper. I refused although Rose looked pleadingly at me, and remarked:

"It is so late we might as well stay out a little later." The play had been a long one, and it was nearly midnight.

"What do you say, Mrs. Graham?" Barrett asked.

"I say go home," I tried to speak lightly. I wanted terribly to go to supper with Barrett, but something held me back. Rose looked daggers at me, but I paid no attention. She had no husband to please and I did.

"Sandra is getting to be such a prim," she told Barrett as we drove home. "Before she was married she was ready for anything. Really, she was the worst one of all. She seems afraid to stir. I can't understand the change in her."

"I can. She is in a different environment. In a place where one has always lived and where everyone knows you, you can do almost anything you please, sure that you will not be misunderstood. But among strangers, many of them critical, you have to be more careful."

"It was a long speech for Barrett, and a more serious one than I ever had heard him make. It had the effect of making me uneasy; almost wishing I had not gone to the theatre with him—something he did not intend, I am sure."

"It must be an awful bore to be always thinking what people are going to say," Rose returned rather pettishly. "I would hate to be constantly thinking I must 'watch my step.'" Rose was inclined to be a bit snappy.

We were at home by this time, and I was rather glad. The conversation had veered into a channel not conducive to my peace of mind. Barrett promised to call in a day or two, then left us at the door. I walked in, Rose following.

"May I ask where you have been until this time of night?" Everett stood glowering at me as he put the question, ignoring Rose entirely.

"I was at the theatre," I faltered.

"Who said you could go to the theatre? I thought I expressly told you in my letter to go to bed early."

"Everett, don't you see Rose, Rose Grandon—you met her out home you know?"

"Yes I remember Miss Grandon," he inclined his head slightly, as with a faint 'good night' Rose slipped past us, up to her room.

In a way I was glad she had gone, that she would no longer be a witness to my humiliation. In another way I wished she had remained. Everett might have been less unreasonable.

Neither of us had replied to Rose's 'good night', but as soon as she had gone Everett said:

"Come into the library!"

I followed meekly, but didn't feel

one bit meek inside. He had been away for days, hadn't told me what he was doing or anything. He hadn't even kissed me. Father always kissed mother several times if he had been away over night.

I stood opposite him after he switched on the lights.

"Why didn't you obey me?" he asked sternly.

"Because—because—why Everett, I haven't done anything wrong. I only—"

"When I tell you to remain at home, to retire early, I expect to be obeyed."

"But I am not a child!" I don't know where I got the courage to speak up as I did. "I was lonely. I asked Rose to come and stay with me while you were gone. I couldn't read or do anything. I was so lonesome. And after she came we had to do something. I am sure that you wouldn't have talked to Leola the way you do to me. I am ashamed to have Rose go home and tell how I was treated. I stopped, frightened almost to death. I had not meant to mention his first wife—to this day I don't know what made me do it. But I was so hurt and angry."

Everett had turned a pasty gray color when I mentioned Leola, and the knuckles of his hands, which gripped the table were white and strained. For a moment he did not reply. Then in a voice I scarcely recognized, he said:

"Go upstairs and go to bed."

"Aren't you coming?" I asked, frightened at his looks.

"Not now—but go!"

I went.

Rose was watching for me, and followed me into my room.

"You poor dear! I was awfully envious of you—all your wonderful clothes, this beautiful home and everything. But I'm not jealous any longer. He's a bear! I wouldn't live with him for a million dollars! I'd be frightened to death to breathe naturally for fear he wouldn't like me. Give me a young man who likes fun, and loves me!" she finished with a great deal of emphasis on the "loves me."

"He was cross because I didn't do as he said," was all I could think of in the way of an apology.

"But you're a married woman! You're not a child living at home with your father and mother. They have a right to boss you, he hasn't. I wouldn't put up with it for a minute. I'd show him where he got off," she finished stangly.

Just then I heard a movement downstairs.

"Run back to your room Rose. He's coming!" and like a frightened rabbit she scuttled back.

"What did your friend have to say to you that couldn't keep till morning?" Everett asked as he closed the door.

"She said she would rather marry a man that loved her than to have all you have given me," I had purposely left out the "young."

"So she thinks I do not love you?"

"Of course."

"Because—because of the way you act—the way you treat me?"

"I see. And you agree with her?"

"Yes. I can't help it. You have been away over a week. You haven't kissed me, not said a kind word. When father went away for one night he loved me more than to draw when he came back."

"He made no reply, and I crawled into bed quivering with anger and disappointment; yet glad he had not asked who took us to the theatre."

Tomorrow—Rose Goes Home. ROSE GOES HOME

CHAPTER L.

The next morning Everett was coldly, almost freezingly polite to Rose. I wished I hadn't told him what she said—it was going to make it horribly uncomfortable for me.

But I needn't have worried. Rose wasn't the kind to stay where she wasn't sure of a good time, and as soon as Everett had left for his office she commenced to pack.

"I wish you would call Barry up and tell him I am going home," she said.

"All right! but I don't see how you can call him 'Barry.' I have known him ever so much longer than you have and I have called him Barrett only a few times. It seems awfully intimate to give him a nick-name."

"Not if you knew."

I wondered what she meant, but could get her to make no explanation. Finally I concluded she was just 'putting on side' as an English friend of mother's used to express it. So I called Barrett up and told him.

He only said: "I am sorry your friend is going. Isn't it rather sudden? She said nothing about it last night."

"It is sudden. Here she is," and I relinquished the telephone to Rose, who talked a good quarter of an hour I am sure.

"He will be at the train," she said when she finally hung up. "You will go down with me, of course."

"Certainly!" I knew by her tone she didn't want me, but neither did I want her to tell Barrett Edmonds how Everett had treated me. I was sure she would if I were not alone.

"I will order the car as long as you are determined to go."

"I wouldn't be hired to stay! I would feel so uncomfortable. I don't see how you stand it, honest I don't. I'm real sorry for you, Sandra."

"That was the last straw."

"Please Rose, don't go back home telling tales, saying you are sorry for me and all that sort of thing. It will make Mother terribly unhappy."

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and make her think I am. I am not really, Rose. Everett is awfully nice at times, and—"

"He'd have to be to make up for the other times. The idea of taking a man's warmed-over affections, and then standing what you do! Nix on the widowers and old men for little bright-eyes. Love in a cottage for me in preference."

I felt awfully like agreeing with her, and to keep from doing it I made myself think of all the nice things Everett had done for me. I tried to tell her of some of them but she wouldn't listen—just pooh-hood everyone of them.

I teased her all the way to the station to promise me she would not worry Mother by telling her how she felt about Everett. But she wouldn't promise. Said she thought it her duty perhaps to let my family know the sort of a crank I had married.

Barrett was at the station waiting to have Rose go home and tell how I was treated. I stopped, frightened almost to death. I had not meant to mention his first wife—to this day I don't know what made me do it. But I was so hurt and angry."

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To my astonishment Everett said nothing about my looks. He was late and after giving me a cold kiss, he went immediately to the dining room.

"Your friend has gone" he asked.

"Yes. That emboldened that he had not scolded, because I had cried. I added: "She couldn't very well stay after—" I hesitated.

"After what?" Everett demanded.

"After the way you talked to me, and the way you acted last night."

He made no reply, but somehow when Everett looked at me so sternly, and in that voice questioned me, I just had to speak the truth.

"Did I tell you you might invite guests?"

"No, Everett. But I was lonely. I don't know any young people my own age to talk to and I didn't think you would object to my asking Rose as long as you weren't here to be annoyed with her. I go so tired of knowing no one but old people—older than I am. I used to have so many friends, all the boys and girls in town. Now I have no one." Tears of self-pity rolled down my cheeks. I was nervous, my head ached, I hadn't slept the night before because of Everett's attitude, and I had cried nearly two hours. Was it any wonder that I said things I would not have dared had I been in a moral condition?

"I am so old I don't count for anyone." His tone was bitter. "You will please leave the table. I will send your coffee and dessert to your room. One would think you needed dolls to play with instead of the boys and girls whose society you say you miss so dreadfully!"

I rose from the table, but something, I don't know what, made me stop and lay my hand on Everett's shoulder and say:

"I am sorry I annoyed you by having Rose."

He made no reply, and I went to my room. In a moment Hetty brought me my dessert and coffee. I couldn't eat, but drank the coffee, then threw myself on the bed and sobbed as if my heart would break. I was in the hysterical throes of sorrow for myself and heard nothing until Hetty came in to undress the bed for the night.

Then I heard the front door close I hurried to the window. Everett was walking rapidly away from the house. Once I thought he looked back, but I couldn't be sure. My tears flowed afresh. He knew I was unhappy, sick and utterly miserable, but he had gone out—leaving me alone without trying to console me.

"Please don't cry any more, Mrs. Graham, you'll surely be sick if you do," Hetty begged after she finished her work.

"I'm sick now, Hetty, so it won't make any difference."

"Can I help you—do anything?"

"No, thank you, Hetty. Just leave me alone." As she closed the door in response to my request, I impulsively called her back. She was only a servant, but she was a girl of my own age. "I didn't mean to speak so sharply, Hetty. But my head aches."

"Let me bathe it for you." She took the bottle of eau de cologne from the dressing table, and for half an hour she bathed my head, smoothing away the pain in both head and heart with her hands. Finally she said: "I think you'll sleep now—thank you for letting me do it for you," and was gone. But somehow I felt comforted.

I was not asleep when Everett



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Advertisement for Menne's Shaving Cream, featuring an illustration of a man shaving and descriptive text.