

Wisdom's Gate

By Margaret Ayer Barnes

"Fox 'thinks you should give him fifty thousand dollars?" Albert's lips curled in scorn. "After talking with Fox, he marked his wife down to half price." Cicily felt drawn to Albert because he was being victimized and she was much more inclined to believe that he was innocent. He said unexpectedly, "I had luncheon with Mother today. I asked her if she could lend me the twenty-five thousand —"

"Albert!" she cried in utter dismay.

He ignored her interjection. "Her own money's pretty well spent, as you know. But Ed's given her presents and she thought she could raise it, or come pretty close to it, by selling what's left of her personal securities. The catch in it is that she keeps them in Ed's security box, which is extremely awkward if this ruction is to be kept from the attention of my esteemed stepfather."

"Did — did she happen to mention that I still have my bank book?"

Obviously shocked, he rose from the armchair. "My dear — that's impossible." He had flushed like a boy.

"I could sell some," said Cicily. "No one would know except Uncle Alden," she added after a moment. "And he's safe in Boston."

On that he faced her and burst out indignantly, "My dear, it's outrageous that you should pay duty."

"Albert," she said, "you really must tell me. Are you being humiliated? I mean, have you led to me?"

The word whipped his face, which whitened and tightened. "No," he said gravely. "What can I say to convince you?" asked Albert.

Nothing, she thought. He couldn't prove anything. An act of faith on her part was all that could save them. She stood silent, longing for a miracle of the heart.

"Oh, Albert," she cried, "I want to believe you!"

The miracle took place as he blazed her in his arms.

She awoke the next morning ridiculously happy, with the clear country sunshine streaming in her east window. She lay for a moment testing the happiness, lingering it gingerly as if it were fragile, drowsily aware that some anguish had preceded it. Then she remembered the events of the evening. Of the night that had followed it. Wider awake, through the open bedroom door she heard his laugh in the dining room and the chatter of the children.

dren. Suddenly she realized the lateness of the hour. She sprang out of bed and began to dress hurriedly. When she ran down the stairs some ten minutes later, Albert was putting on his coat in the hall.

They had only a moment, with the children around them, so she could say nothing of any significance; but his kiss sealed their reconciliation once more.

XVII

Cicily wrote her Uncle Alden, quite briefly and affectionately, that she and Albert found it hard to live on their incomes, that some bills had piled up, that rather appalled her, and that she would like him to sell twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of her bank stock that she might have a cash fund to draw on for emergencies.

As she walked into the hall to place the letter on the table to wait for the postman, she heard the sound of a motor on the drive outside. It was, she observed very much to her surprise, her mother-in-law's limousine and Aunt Muriel herself was sitting inside.

Aunt Muriel descended from the car clumsily. Cicily clasped her solid, mink-coated figure and smelled the French perfume that she had associated with Aunt Muriel from her earliest childhood.

"How are you, dear child?" asked Aunt Muriel solicitously. She pressed her soft cheek, with its smooth coat of powder, to Cicily's firm one.

"Me? I'm fine. I'm simply dandy," said Cicily defensively.

Aunt Muriel looked at her with her bright blue eyes. Cicily felt an increasing embarrassment, for the candor of those eyes could not possibly be ingenuous.

"Come in," she said hastily. "I'm awfully glad to see you." As she led the way to the living room she thought with grim humor. Of course she doesn't know that Albert has told me. "Sit down in the armchair while I light the fire," she suggested pleasantly.

"If I sat in that armchair, I'd never get out of it." Aunt Muriel's habit of taking herself lightly was one of the things that made her seem young. But she always selected a seat that became her, and now she sat down on a small walnut-backed sofa and threw off the coat from her broad-shouldered figure and drew off her gloves to stretch her hands to the fire. Cicily sank back to sit cross-legged on the hearthrug and looked up at her mother-in-law with a touch of impatience.

(To Be Continued)

ECZEMA

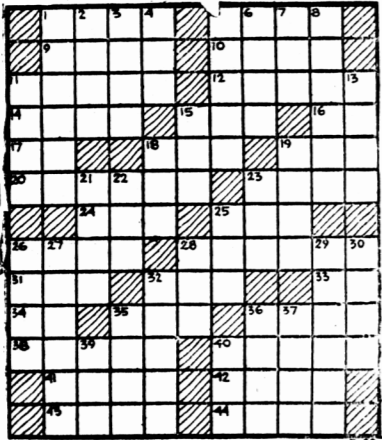
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DAILY CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
- Cutting tools
 - Music character
 - Stop
 - Italian coins
 - A bounding in sunshine
 - Celestial being
 - Detest
 - Noah's boat
 - Music note
 - Pronoun
 - Question
 - Lair
 - Bird
 - String
 - Lofty mountain
 - Chum
 - Island of the Aleutians
 - Golf club
 - Owls
 - Male descender
 - Greek letter
 - Mulberry
 - Drowned
 - Rodent (So Am.)
 - A stalk of grass
 - Student
 - Verbal
 - Wine receptacle
 - Piece of merchandise
 - Venture DOWN
 - Vegetable
 - One's mother's sister

POW. GANE
EPE. APPE
SEEDY. PEACE
OB. STY. RIT
PLY. CASE. S
TEAL. BOG. S
RIP. POE. S
WINTER. NARD
EN. EWER. RRE
S. BOG. S
LOSK. PAWED
DEAR. EVER
EIDA. DAN. S

Yesterday's Answer



DAILY CRYPTOQUOTE—Here's how to work it:

one letter simply stands for another. In this example A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

A Cryptogram Quotation
#AJCYBYIAV TJT DYH PJDT ICWHY
DYSOR. JH EWTR AJE BY—BRDROW.

Yesterday's Cryptogram: PRESERVE ME. O MY INTEGRITY,
SINCE I HAVE DILIGENTLY PRESERVED THEE—PLAUTUS.

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