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By Marion Rubincam

A SHY FRIENDSHIP

This uncomfortable state lasted for several minutes. Finally in desperation, Morton asked:

"Miss Nicholson, may I have this dance?"

Ordinarily he would have called her by her first name. But his own formality of feeling made him give her the formal title.

Dora didn't want to dance. She could see that with Jesse and Charlie and a few that she knew better. Perhaps it was the "Miss" that made her feel more shy than usual.

The worst of it was she couldn't find the courage to say no. She was sure Morton wanted to dance with her even less than she wanted to dance with him. But if she talked she had to refuse, she had to speak—so she stood up as a sign that she had consented.

Fancy steps are "in" that winter and Gladys, as usual, knew more than anyone else, and led the others in doing or manufacturing variations of the accepted steps. Jim was so delighted at seeing his daughter dance, that he kept on playing without giving them an intermission, until even Gladys was glad of a space of rest and to catch her breath.

"Well, look at Mort," she called, bringing the attention of the room upon the unfortunate couple.

"Mort don't tell me you're really asking a girl to dance with you?"

The boy turned red under his freckles, and Dora, confused, lost step and stumbled awkwardly.

"I—I think it's time for me to make the cocoa," she mumbled and fled to the kitchen. Jim, seeing her go, stopped playing and the party sat down to breathe heavily and recuperate.

Mrs. Nicholson was already busy in the kitchen. The party had got to that stage where all thoughts were of food, and talk became forced. They trooped into the dining room to eat, laugh, make more or less witty jokes to each other, and to troop out again.

Jim, being tired, took his opportunity to sneak off to bed, lest his services as an orchestra should be in demand again. Someone suggested kissing games.

A large number of new were played. The party was getting into a mild state of what the boys called a "rough house." They were all nothing but a lot of healthy young people, a true uncorrupted, perhaps, according to certain standards, wholesome enough all through. Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson tactfully retired.

"I don't know as I approve of it," Peter said.

Aunt Maude wasn't sure either. But she didn't want to interfere, so she saved her conscience by repeating, "Those that kiss in the night won't kiss in the dark." She thought that might be a novelty.

In the game, as in the dancing, the circle that Gladys ruled accepted and forgot her cousin Dora. No one reached after him, and she was glad. A couple of times she was caught and kissed and her ears burned and she felt only ashamed. Yet they all played these games, and she was silly to mind, she thought.

Morton alone remained aloof. His exertions not to catch his girl was the best joke of the party. In a game of Blind Man's Buff, one of the boys pushed Dora into his arms, as he groped around, oblivious, trying not to catch anyone.

By all the rules of the game, he had to kiss her. But Dora scurried, checked, and feeling highly uncomfortable and ridiculous, pulled away so hard while the others laughed that finally Gladys came to her rescue.

"They shan't tease you!" she cried, "Go away, but let my cousin alone. Undo Mortie's handkerchief and let's play something else."

In the general confusion and laughter and teasing, Dora left the room. It was to go to the kitchen where she attacked the piled up dishes from the party. Her father had come to bed, her uncle also. Aunt Maude set up, because she felt it her duty. But it was said

night and Aunt Maude slumbered peacefully in the sitting room, taking her duties as chaperone very easily.

After a little the door opened and a sandy head appeared.

"Come I help?" Morton asked.

It was like being asked to dance. She hadn't the courage to refuse. So she handed him a dishtowel.

And in that domestic way a shy little friendship began between a friendless girl, and a quiet, retiring, rather studious boy.

"I hate those childish games," Morton said, wiping up the cups and plates. "Guess I'm too old for them."

"Guess I am too," Dora answered. She was not uncomfortable about her hands now, which were immersed in hot dish water and busy with china.

Gladys says you're fond of books? Morton went on in the manner of one making small talk. "Have you read—"

"They soon lost all sense of embarrassment and had a nice time over the plates. They were laughing and talking easily when the dishes were finally packed away.

Later Gladys came up to Dora's room, yawning widely.

"Go, I'm tired!" she heard that Newberry didn't go, so he kept kissing games he ran home as soon as we tried to make him kiss you. I hate him, he's such an idiot."

A DISTURBANCE

Chapter 6

Dora wondered why Gladys should hate Morton Newberry. Or, rather, she wondered how she could hate anyone as nice as he. In all her life Dora had not met anyone like him. So she thought as she lay awake for an hour or so.

It had been a lovely party, she decided, quite the nicest she had ever attended. She remembered others—for she was always asked whenever Gladys went. But she always sat in a corner, she spoke because she was spoken to, she was shy and awkward and uncomfortable until she knew the people very well indeed. Even then she was unattractively quiet.

No one—that is, no young man—had ever paid any attention to her before. Morton was the first, and she was 21! The tiny budding feeling of romance that comes to most girls at 16 or even earlier, now came to her now for the first time.

She was sorry when she felt sleepy, because she liked to think of all the things they talked about while she was washing dishes.

As for Gladys, she did not say a word. Like her mother, her eyes were heavy as soon as she was quiet and with no one to do, she was asleep the moment her head was on the pillow.

But sitting on Dora's bed she expressed her opinion of all her recent guests.

"The show's getting worse, it's a blizzard this time. For sure, I've got like all five near here—you might suppose 'top hadn't' showed off any snow to see the pavement. Guess we'll be snowed in by Monday."

She yawned again, leaning back against the bed post and unhooking her dress leisurely as she talked.

"It's all right for all but Mort. He is a very pretty far off-guess he had some time getting home, so it's good he went early."

She laughed again her eyelids steadily drooping, pulling her dress from her shoulders, too warm blooded to mind the cold air against her skin. She looked extraordinarily voluptuous as she sat there with drooping eyelids—a softness not yet conscious of itself.

"What a boob he is! I didn't ask him—Jesse brought him along."

She forgot him promptly and began talking of Jesse, Jesse, at the moment was her favorite—a husky six foot-two chap of 21 or so, with an amount of energy that not the hardest work could tire him. Mrs. Nicholson hoped that this little might develop into what she called "something serious."

But Gladys had not a serious thought in her head at the time. She wanted Jesse exclusively, any other girl that looked at him met with her determined enmity and jealousy—and she wanted the attentions of all the rest of the boys in a greater or lesser degree, as well.

She went off to her room now, her dress over her arm, rosy cheeked, sleepy, a little less attractive in camouflage and petulant than she had been with her silk dress pulled off one shoulder.

Next day was Sunday, which meant that everyone slept late. Sleeping late, however, was only half an hour's grace over the usual early rising hour. But Dora committed an indiscretion—she quite forgot. Last night she had been too tired to sleep at once. And there was this new friend to think about. So it had been far into the morning before she slept. She woke to hear her aunt's voice:

"My land, both of you like this dear! Dora! Dora! Do you know what time it is young lady? Almost eight—where's the sugar?"

"Where's what?" Dora asked, wondering in her dead asleep state what sugar had to do with time, or anything else.

"The sugar that I sent you for to Dyer's" came excitedly and ungrammatically.

The girl was awake now, alarmed.

"Oh, that sugar—I used that for the fairest last night!"

"Oh, you did! And here we're snowed in so no one can get out for days or more, and it's Sunday anyway, and not a drop in the house."

This strange sentence conveyed

a meaning to the girl. She jumped out of bed, shivered, and began dressing as hastily as possible. Down in the kitchen she began explaining:

"You only told me three pounds and then you used some for a dessert. We had some more—"

"They went into the cake—and now your uncle wants 'em for a spoonful for dinner, and only a spoonful in the whole place. And you know how he gets when he can't have what he wants—"

"I saw you rushing about with a torrent of objections and lamentations."

"You only told me to get three pounds—Dora put in timidly once."

"Couldn't you see a blizzard coming? Couldn't you tell we'd need more? I declare you've no more brains than—"

"—pausing for a moment, she went on—"

"—than I could bring strong enough—than I could expect from a child of your father and mother."

She went on about breakfast, walking heavily. When she was angry she refused help with the work, she refused help now. Dora went up to her room to do the chamber work. She was terribly depressed, but not in the least angry. It was no good saying that her aunt had trained her to obey literally always—never to use her judgment. She knew she was in a creditably stupid

A CALLER

Chapter 7

The reason why Pandora at 21 was as socially backward as an undeveloped girl of 16, was a simple and tragic one. And a common one.

But it was a long time before the girl found this out, and a still longer time before she was able to remedy it.

Her Aunt Maude, in kindly moments said she was "born shy." In less kindly moments, she said she was "born a ninny." The girl heard both criticisms frequently. When her father tried to urge her to join in the young people's parties, she had had and said:

"No, I'd rather not. I feel so awkward. And I can't even think of anything to say."

Her father laughed at this. She was anything but tongue tied with him! He concluded she was joking and promptly forgot all about it. He always forgot unpleasant things as soon as possible.

The next time he was reminded, Dora suggested:

"Let's go for a walk instead. They won't miss us."

And then he was delighted, because it gave him some hours of her companionship, and she was a charming companion to him.

"I don't see why you keep repeating that about not talking. Why don't you remember that in a hotel we stayed at in—wasn't it Waco—and the way you talked to that man and his wife—and the baby? You talked all evening, and you were great friends for the three days we were there."

"That was different," Pandora answered. "They were both so miserably poor, worse than we were, and he wanted a job and couldn't think of anything to do because day laborer's wages weren't enough to allow for care of the baby."

"Well, you had them both telling you the history of their lives, and then you went off and found him a job—"

"It was only finding out that he had a talent, being careful with him. As soon as they made him foreman of that foreign work gang, he was all right. He could understand them and the other foreman only irritated them."

"Well, you had the ability to fit the square peg into the round hole!" Jim concluded triumphantly. He never thought how square a peg the girl was when she came to the round hole of her own problem.

"He only 'eked confidence,'" Dora said. And it never occurred to her that that was what she lacked in enormous degree. She thought her father flattered her because he was her father. Yet after being with him, she gained a little of his confidence.

"Well, something such as this Sunday morning incident happened and every shred of self belief was torn away from her. For three days

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while the storm made going out almost impossible, she went about the house in a state of intense depression. The blizzard made it impossible to go to church. Monday little city was blanketed thick with a white drift. Discontent, disturbance and depression existed in the Nicholson house—all because the sugar supply gave out, and Peter bled everything sweet and syrupy. Gladys' party was to blame, but somehow the blame was shifted around to Dora, who was looked upon as having committed another stupid blunder.

Aunt Maude, upset and cross because Peter was cross, took it out by being over everything. The usual sugar blunder was forgotten of course. It was a small thing, it was merely the sense of disturbance that lasted.

"I declare, you've been doing everything wrong, these last few days," Aunt Maude scolded. "Now you know those sheets are for the guest room only—not the family. And you've put the best milk jug on the rickety shelf by the steps."

And so it went on.

"I'm tired," Dora told herself again and again as she went about her household duties. "Why do I do everything wrong? When Aunt Maude goes on so, I simply can't think. It must be a poor sort of brain that gets befogged so easily."

But Tuesday it was possible to get to the stores, so she made her way down town to repair her resplendent blunder. On the way she met Morton Newberry helping clear the sidewalks.

"Do you mind if I come around to see you some evening soon?" he asked.

And she smiled and said "yes." She went home feeling a certain pleasure. Morton was the first man who had ever asked to call on her.

He appeared next night. But Aunt Maude announced it this way, "Gladys, Morton Newberry is downstairs to see you. Put on your silk waist and go down. Dora and I will finish in the kitchen."

It never occurred to her that any man would come to see anyone but her own daughter!

A CONFIDENTIAL DIARY

Chapter 8

Dora did see Morton Newberry after a time, of course. She shared all the social activities, and pleasures of the family, so far as her shy temperament would let her. But for three-quarters of an hour she stayed behind in the kitchen until that place was as shiningly clean as Aunt Maude desired, and until the dining room table was set for the next morning's breakfast. Then she ran up to her room, to comb her hair into curls again, and in her hurry, making a very unbecoming arrangement of it.

Then she went down to the "parlor" to find Gladys playing the piano, Jesse standing by her singing, and Morton standing a little way off, smoking a cigar and looking as though he wished he could sing too.

"You've got a beautiful voice," Jesse was complimenting Gladys. "Now, let's try this new one. Judson only got it in yesterday."

Gladys began to play it. She had a rich voice which made up in volume what it lacked in fineness of quality. Aside from the usual singing exercises at school, it was trained solely by imitating the vaudeville "artists" who played now and then at the one small theatre. This meant that she forced a natural contralto to high soprano, with somewhat disastrous results. Jesse impressed by sound and strength, really thought it remarkable.

Gladys was particularly good at "coon songs." She reached the "coon songs," she reached the "coon songs," she reached the "coon songs."

"Oh, how I love you, ho-ho-ho," and rolled her great eyes at Jesse with telling effect. When Jesse joined in the song, one could feel the room shake a little.

"I'm, gee, that's great isn't it?" was as far as a compliment as poor Morton could get.

But it was quite all right, Gladys took even generalities to herself. She favored Morton with part or smile, and turned at once to Jesse. That was the only attention she paid to her second guest that night.

Morton, making conversation desperately, asked,

"Don't you sing, er, Miss Nicholson?"

Dora shook her head. She had a sweet, untrained little voice. "But when she heard it, she was so terrified it froze in her throat. She sang at church when the congregation was large enough so her vocal contribution was quite drowned, and once in awhile she sang when she was alone.

After the two men went, Gladys remarked:

"Now, why did Jesse bring you here again? I can't stand him. I shouldn't think he'd want to come around without being asked. He can certainly see I don't pay any attention to him. But some people have no more sense than—"

Unable to find a companion, she

began yawning. Instead, and presently went to bed. As Mrs. Dora had been ruthlessly taken away from her by Gladys—taken and discarded. The old little elated feeling she had because someone actually had asked to see her was quite destroyed; it was succeeded by an even greater depression.

"He won't come again," she said to herself. "Why on earth should he? Gladys was rude to him and I couldn't think of a thing to say to make his evening interesting."

She thought about this so much that she could not sleep until evening later than usual. When the waking hours dragged out to a nervous excitement she usually got up and read for awhile, finding this quieted her into drowsiness.

But once in awhile when she was feeling rather badly, she sat and scribbled in a diary-notebook that she had. This was a fairly thick volume with heavily gilt edges and a clasp and key, that had been printed in letters at the beginning of the blank pages. "Thoughts on Loneliness." Later, as she grew older and read more, she changed this to, "The Philosophy of Loneliness," rubbing out the first crude letters. The things she first wrote were of course, ridiculous—yet infinitely pathetic as the attempt of a child to express itself.

This night she began:

"I have missed another chance. I am no good at anything at all. I am convinced of that. I have not what novelists call personality. This evening I might have made M. N. like me enough for him to want to come again—but I sat tongue-tied while it was mine to J. and made to him. I am always missing chances. Some day they will cease to come."

(Continued on Page Two.)

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The plant is situated on the Marygate Road, about a quarter mile from the centre of the Town, and commands a tenacious prospect of the Town and of the surrounding country for fully ten miles. The poultry house faces the south, in front of which is a handsome grove of beautiful trees that offer natural adornment. The location was chosen with a view to taking advantage of nature in sunlight and heat. The building is 75 ft. long and 14 ft. wide, has a double pitched roof, with a straw loft to absorb rising dampness. It is adequately lighted and ventilated by spacious windows that have glass in lower section and corrugated iron above, which are open during the day to admit sunlight and fresh air, two absolute essentials to satisfactory operation.

The interior is divided into three compartments which eliminate draughts and enable him to

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Mr. Millman attaches great importance to the male birds which must descend from the best producing strain. He has four cockerels from the L. R. Guild strain, who is a noted Ontario breeder. He selects the best producers, etc. for hatching purposes. Thus improved by judicious selection. This involves a close intimacy with the individual producing powers of the flock.

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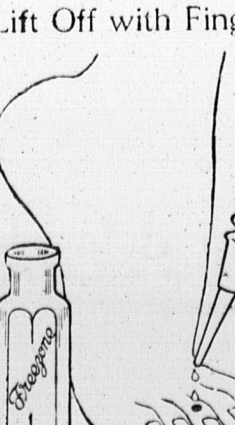
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