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CRESCENT CARNIVAL

By FRANCES PARKISON KEYES
(Continued)

Looking up to measure his height above her own, she regarded him covertly but carefully. He was even handsomer, seen at her side, than viewed from a distance. They talked only of trivialities, but before the twenty minutes were up, young Mr. Breckenridge had managed to whisper a question. "What is the next gathering to which you are going? Tell me quickly!"

"Madame O'Brien and Madame Villere are giving a pink and green tea together at Madame O'Brien's house next Wednesday. I am certain you will receive a card."

"I do not," I shall naturally assume that it was lost in the mail. And I shall depend on you to save me the first wait."

"But, Monsieur, how can I do that?"

"Nothing could be simpler. Merely say, 'I promise, and I shall be satisfied. I know already that you keep your word.'"

At the appointed time, Estelle stood under the trailing ropes of smilax which swung from the crystal chandelier overhead to the four corners of the "fairly big bower" into which the O'Briens' dining room had been transformed. Two hours later, she stepped through the ivy-twined doorway into the garlanded gallery, straight to the waiting arms of Andrew Breckenridge, and waited with him, listening, with mingled fear and fascination to the words which were muffled by the strains of the Beautiful Blue Danube.

"Did you ever fall in love, Miss Lenoir?"

"No, Monsieur."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"I'm not. I think you're doing it right now. At least I hope so."

"Oh, Monsieur! Why should you say such a thing?"

"Because I'm certainly falling in love with you. I'm going to propose to you as soon as I can find a secluded spot."

But even the resourcefulness of young Mr. Breckenridge was unequal to finding a secluded spot at the pink and green tea of Madame O'Brien and Madame Villere.

It was only a few days after that fateful dance with Andy Breckenridge, that Estelle's mother told her something very astonishing.

"Your grandmother and your father and I have decided to permit you to make your debut this coming winter, instead of winter after next. On the opening night of the opera you will sit in the front of the loge, beside me, with your bouquets piled all around you. The grille will be drawn back and even your grandmother will appear. Your father will sit beside her. All our friends will come to greet you and extend their good wishes. It should be a very happy occasion for you."

The opera was La Traviata, one of Estelle's favorites. It was not until the curtain had gone down and the entr'acte had begun, that she returned to reality as embodied by her own share of the evening's entertainment. She had laid her fan and her bouquet carefully in her lap. She was still clapping when she became aware that the boxes were emptying, and that the customary exchange of visits had begun. The Fontaines were the first to stop before the loge grille. She had hardly spoken to Marcel when she saw another attractive young gentleman approaching and stopped suddenly, her heart beating fast as she recognized Andy Breckenridge. Unconsciously, she made an impulsive gesture, in doing so she swept all the flowers from the velvet-padded railing to the floor of the aisle.

Andy Breckenridge, with incredible swiftness, retrieved the fallen flowers and was deftly replacing them where they had been before. "Good evening, Mesdames. Good evening, Monsieur. Mademoiselle, you reverse the normal order of things. It is I who should be casting flowers at your feet. I should never have dared to hope for such an attention."

"Monsieur, my daughter regrets the unfortunate accident in the same measure that I do," Monsieur Lenoir said icily. "It occurs to me that you must have made an error."

"My life has been full of errors," young Mr. Breckenridge said. "But believe me, Monsieur, I made no mistake this time. I shall try to convince you of this on some later and more appropriate occasion. But for the moment it would ill beseem me to monopolize the conversation when there are so many others who are waiting to offer their good wishes to Mademoiselle. Monsieur, mes compliments. Mesdames, mes hommages."

He was gone as suddenly as he had come.

Estelle forced herself to sit very still, holding her head high and looking straight before her.

Presently she heard Marcel speaking to her father. "Monsieur, may I venture to beg that you do not misinterpret the manner of my very good friend, Andrew Breckenridge? Believe me, he regards you and Madame with great respect, while as for Estelle," he broke off, turning from Monsieur Lenoir to his daughter. "See, Estelle," he said, "Monsieur Leroux is looking at you through his opera glasses. I am sure that he must have been struck with your suitability for a Queen, the minute he saw you sitting here."

CHAPTER II

Monsieur Leroux was in the drawing room, talking to Monsieur Lenoir in hushed and solemn tones, which were appropriate for so portentous an occasion. Estelle, although listening from the tightly closed dining room door, had not been able to hear a single sent-

Barbara BUYS WHYS

MONTREAL, February 15th — Who would ever have believed that puddings could be so simple, yet so creamy, so homelike tasting as JELL-O PUDDINGS are? Certainly I'm thrilled at the way the family make short work of my Jell-O Pudding desserts! And you will be too! Such favourable, such easy-to-make desserts at the wonderfully economical price are truly unbelievable... and I suspect this Jell-O Pudding and the three Jell-O Tapioca Puddings are a grand way of increasing the milk intake of your young 'uns who simply do not like milk. I keep a good stock of the four delicious Jell-O Puddings and the three Jell-O Tapioca Puddings... both types are family favourites.

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Whether You "Tub" Your Clothes — or wash them in a machine — your hands are in water a great deal of the time. That's why it's so important to use a soap that's kind to your hands — as well as effective in cleaning your clothes! That's DUS! If no-rinse chemicals have been making your hands rough and red, by all means change to Dus! It gives you such beautifully clean, white washes — yet leaves your hands soft and white, too! That's because Dus — and only Dus — has this combination of rich, real soap and two active detergents! So when you use Dus you get amazing cleaning power combined with marvelous mildness! Try it next wash-day! Get a Giant Economy Size package of Dus next time you're shopping!

The important thing is not how much your income is — but how you use it. I've never been so aware of this simple truth as during the last few weeks since I began Personal Planning — that smart, up-to-date way of family-financing, designed by the BANK OF MONTREAL. Here, at last, is a system that shows me how to live within my income and like it. Yes, even with today's soaring living costs, Personal Planning can help you and your family get the most out of every dollar. It requires a bit of planning to begin with — but it's well worth it! There's a booklet about it called "PERSONAL PLANNING for Successful Home-makers" that every woman should read and discuss with the menfolk in her family. You can get your copy at your neighborhood branch of the B of M. I guarantee you'll be glad you did.

ence. Then she heard the voices, no longer hushed and solemn, but ringing and hearty. A moment later the front door opened and shut, and then her father returned, approaching the dining room. She rose respectfully to meet him.

"En bien, ma fille," Monsieur Lenoir said, with unconcealed gratification. "I have some very important news for you. It seems that our good friend, Monsieur Leroux, was so favorably impressed with your appearance on the opening night of the opera that he has done as the honor of asking me if I would permit you to preside as the Queen of a Carnival Ball."

"Oh, Papa!" said Estelle faintly. "I can understand you are agitated. But, there, there is no occasion for concern." Monsieur Lenoir took Estelle's hand and patted it, his pride and pleasure shining in his eyes. "You are not supposed to know anything about this, but the roses which will reach you on the morning of Christmas Day, by special messenger. This 'Krowe' over which you are to reign is a new one. So you, my dear, as its first Queen, must set the standard for all the other Queens who are to follow after you."

Her husband's cousins, the de Gruys, who were down from St. Martinville to do their winter shopping, had always been thorns in Madame Lenoir's side. They never could be persuaded to stay with the Lenors, or any of their other connections, when they came to New Orleans, nor would they put up in style at the Hotel St. Louis. During Carnival time they made their headquarters on the "round boat" by which they had travelled, and which remained conveniently tied up at the end of

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Canal Street until it shopped off, les Hotel. Monsieur and Madame on their return trip; at other times Lenoir dined with them there, unless they "descended" to the St. Charles protest, and only because if they did not, the de Gruys would not dine with them in Royal Street either. (To be continued)

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