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John Fall Flower by Marvin Robinson

NEW EVENTS

Chapter 63 Events settled down to the usual routine—a rapid routine, to be sure, for things went fast whenever Gloria Gates happened to be.

Then she was off for her office always trimly clad in a tallory suit and always with the smartest hat she could buy or design.

Pan who had been up early enough to have Frankie aressee, and breakfast was left alone as mistress of the flat. She adored planning dainty little dinners for the occasions when Gloria dined at home.

Then she answered as much of Gloria's correspondence as she could, put in a pile the letters Gloria herself had to do, and listed her future engagements.

After that he was free to play and Pan to do as she wished. She kept Gloria's dresses mended, sent gloves to the cleaners, and maa-herself indispensable that way too.

Excitement starts when you come home," she said one afternoon. "We live like quiet nuns until you call hello from the door."

So the rest of the winter passed, and the Spring after what seemed like a dozen false starts, actually settled down to its business of warm sunshine and budding trees.

"I suppose not with a baby expected. She's to live there isn't she?" "Yes, until fall. My old bedroom is to be the nursery. Aunt Maude said I could have father's and father, if he comes back, could have one of the garret rooms."

"Kind of Aunt Maude!" Gloria laughed. "Do you want to go back Pan?" "Pan did not answer, she could not. A little dread of going back with her all winter. How could she bear the narrow life of the farm the days and weeks with no one but the family to see the prejudice of her aunt and uncle, the snubs and superiority of her cousin?"

"Would you have any feeling about Morton?" Gloria asked curiously. "No!" Pan answered emphatically. "That's just dropped from me, like an old cloak. I could not have cared much. It's all passed, every bit—you know I think I'd be a bit bored by him now."

"I knew it," Gloria said triumphantly. "I knew what would happen as soon as you found something better. Don't go Pan. We can't get along without you. You don't want to—"

"It's a sense of duty, I suppose," Pan answered. "Aunt Maude seems to want me and expect me."

"Naturally—since she can't find anyone who will work as hard as you did for three times the money." "She thinks I've deserted—"

"Child, if you've such a strong sense of duty, how about us?" Gloria asked smiling at the young girl. "I couldn't trust Frankie with anyone but you with a clear mind. Poor kid, he's been under a succession of nurse maids, each one worse than the other. If I hadn't a business of my own to look after, I suppose I could take care of him though I'm so neurotic that half an hour of my society is about all he can stand at one time. You're better for him than I am."

Skin Eruptions Are Usually Due to Constipation. When you are not constipated, there is not enough lubricant produced by your system to keep the food waste soft. Doctors prescribe Nujol because its action is so close to this natural lubricant.

den of several pounds had dropped off with this decision. "Good!" Gloria commented and felt too as though a burden had dropped off.

"I ought to go abroad this Spring or early this Summer, you know—and I couldn't leave Frankie in strange hands. Benson wants me to pick up a lot of old French furniture for him. Of course I could see the cheaper things."

To go abroad! Actually, to be offered a chance to go abroad. Pan could not believe it. But Gloria was busy planning.

"Of course," she said. "That's the best idea of all. That a general idea you might want to go back to the farm in the Spring—your father might want you."

"My last letter was from Rio," Pan said. "I don't believe he'll come back, except perhaps for a few months. If he isn't home now, he's sure Uncle Peter won't have him. He's always so cross whenever father goes off."

"Curious that you should be so placid, so ready to stay in one place," Gloria mused. "You father has a roving foot."

"I wanted to go, but I never would have had the courage to go by myself," Pan answered. "But tell me more about going abroad. You can't imagine how wonderful it sounds."

"It would be fun," Gloria agreed. "It's been years since I've been over. I swore I never would, while my husband lived there—but he won't be in Paris, and we'll go there. I'll put you and Frankie in the nicest little hotel, in charge of a dear little old French woman, and you can amuse yourselves while I hunt Louis Quinze and Ormulu for my millionaire client—who incidentally will pay my expenses."

"Pan protested at being a burden, to which Gloria answered practically. "My dear, if I took a nurse, I should have to pay her expenses, as well as Frankie's, a salary at least as large as I give you—and probably more. If I sent him to a boy's camp I'd worry all Summer, and he would not be happy—and it could be costly too."

"Don't think too much about money. Don't you know that the people who could pennies never have a chance to count anything larger?" "You were \$500 in debt last week," Pan reminded gently. "And \$1,000 to the good, this," Gloria answered cheerfully. "This is a big order. I asked for \$1,500 advance, which he gave me. Never mind child, my hectic finances worry your methodical little soul—but I like them. It adds zest to life. Now then, I'll send about tickets and you arrange with which ever cook you can have this week, to leave us by April."

But April came and went and May came, before there were definite preparations for sailing. The Benson house was up the river, and Mr. Benson put one of his cars at Gloria's disposal to run back and forth from country to town.

"Pan ran to her father, here was the magnet, here was her reason for her week-end home. And she greeted Morton, when he drove out a little later, without a single feeling but one of quiet friendliness.

"That's a good idea," Gloria agreed—she was lounging as usual in his favorite chair in Gloria's living room. "We learn by contrast. The child thought she was too fond of a lad in her home town—now lo, he's got back and find out she isn't interested in him at all. She's never quite believed that."

"Pan gave him a little smile that puzzled him. "What is it child?" he asked. "You look so superior as though you knew all sorts of things I don't know and never will!" "I do," Pan answered, and refused to be drawn out any more.

How could George know that she was in love with him? He would never suspect it, she would never let on, Gloria did not guess it. She remembered the little day, she had left on the farm, tightly wrapped and hidden in a box in the attic, where some of her old things were stored. That used to be all her confidences, that was once her only friend she was so alone then. She was alone now, in a way. "I am still standing apart from the world," she thought. "Once I had two good friends, both in my imagination—my ideal man and my ideal woman. I made the mistake of thinking Morton was the man. I know better now. Morton had too many limitations—he simply wasn't the sort."

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She was thinking how her life had changed, how happy things had turned out, how much better it was now, than a year ago, as she packed a small travelling bag and prepared to go home for a brief visit. Yet when she reached the familiar station, she had a momentary sinking under her heart.

HOME AGAIN Chapter 65 Unexpectedly, it was Aunt Maude who met the train.

"My land, but you look expensive," she remarked after a prefatory kiss. "Did Mrs. Gates give you a suit, or did you buy it with your own money?" "I bought it," Pan answered and wondered why she should resent this remark. Surely one's aunt had a perfect right to ask such questions!

Aunt Maude thought so, at least. She went straight along. "That's a nice hat—sort of odd, but nice. How much did it cost?" "I don't know," the girl answered still stifling her irritation.

"Oh, Mrs. Gates gave it to you? Well, it does look like the sort of things she wore."

"Type of clothes! My land, don't you sound grand. Clothes are clothes, some cost more than others, if you mean type by that. Gladys says you wear a nurse's uniform, like that nun's rig the nurse wore here last Summer."

"Oh, doing fine. We've been making baby clothes. Did you bring anything from the stores in the city?" Pan was glad she had remembered a package of dainty little objects suitable for a newly born infant.

It was this package, indeed, which started her visit pleasantly. Some few letters had been exchanged. Gladys was consumed with curiosity about her cousin. She did not recognize, in the slim, self-possessed attractively dressed young figure that jumped lightly from the wagon, the impossibly shabby, terrified little creature who had departed six months before.

For the first time, she disliked herself. She felt huge, awkward, cumbersome, out-of-date, out of the world, beside the once-snubbed Pandora. Pan's greeting, indeed, was pleasant—but lacked in either affection or gratitude, and somehow Gladys felt she should expect both from her cousin.

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Aunt Maude could not understand such a life. And what she could not understand, she could not approve. "Why does a woman want her own business for anyway?" she asked. "If she's so attractive, she must have plenty of men wanting to marry her. Why doesn't she take one and settle down—then she could look after her son."

"She is married, she doesn't live with her husband," Gladys interrupted her voice showing that any woman who elected to be independent was quite likely very bad indeed.

"Why should she live with him. He came back to New York, and she was so upset she was ill for weeks. How can you disapprove, Gladys? You don't know what he was like—I do. No self-respecting woman would have anything to do with him."

"Are all these men who come to see her of you?" "Her, I suppose," Pan answered. "Why not?" "Well, Doris," Aunt Maude concluded, using the girl's old nickname. "I think you're not in good company and had better come home. Gladys can help more with the work in the Winter, though live in their own house, Summers on the farm with us."

"I'm sorry," said Pan, knowing guiltily that she wasn't sorry at all. "But I've promised Gloria to stay. She can't get on without me. And she's going to Europe in the Summer."

This was impressive enough! Even Uncle Peter looked up from the paper he was reading. Her own father was delighted, he began talking of all the old villages and towns he had wandered into, told her that to eat so she wouldn't be so sick, asked for what seemed a cards while she was away.

Gladys was growing sullen. Doris was having entirely too much of this world's goods. Doris was getting everything—fine clothes, trips to Europe, dances and parties, she hadn't got a husband. And she looked placid again as she glanced over at Morton.

A CABLEGRAM Chapter 66 Gladys recovered her equanimity by reflecting that after all, it was she who was Doris (as she called her) who had married Morton. Pan was clever enough to see this.

After she returned to the city, she had to give all the details of her trip to Gloria, and this was one of them. "She's very curious to watch," Pan said, speaking of Gladys. "She's so awfully satisfied with herself. You know, you said to me once that I ought not to be so discontented with myself, that I should be more pleased with what I was—well, I wouldn't be as self-satisfied as she is, not for worlds."

"I agree with you," "We go to church and pray to be made contented with our lot. I often think we should add a little postscript prayer not to be made too contented and satisfied."

"Of course, it's very wonderful to be married to a man one loves and to have a baby, particularly when it's the first baby, there's something romantic about that," Pan went on, with the air of having been married years and having up in her a dozen children. "But it isn't love in her case. It's an instinct to be a wife and a mother. I suppose she was only following out her instinct last Summer, when I thought she was just being nasty to me—about Morton."

Gloria laughed again. It was late evening. Pan had come in on the same train as she. It was only half a year before, when she was so lost and terrified that she had to be met at the station. Gloria had returned from her own week-end party earlier, and put Frankie to bed. She was wrapped now, and had been reading all the papers piled up in her absence when Pan came in.

"It would be a peaceful world if everyone forgave everyone else because... the nasty things done were the result of instinct," Gloria said. "I'm afraid it wouldn't be nearly so interesting. I like a certain amount of fight in the world. I'm afraid that theory of yours takes away all such things as freedom of will. I want to feel that what I do, good or bad, is done by my own will—not because of certain inherited instincts."

"Father says he's going back to Brazil in the fall, she told her. "He's met a man here who has a fine scheme for cattle ranches way back in the interior, and he wants father with him. It's a chance."

"That's freedom, father says. It's not like the farm, the ranch extends ten or 15 miles. Father would have to ride 30 to 50 miles a day. Father was charming. But—talking of freedom—I know he'd be happier roaming the world alone, than tied to me and one place. He can't stand a comfortable life. Uncle Peter is so annoyed with him he hardly speaks to him. And your aunt—"

"Oh, Aunt Maude is the same as ever. Just now she's to busy with Gladys to worry much over either father or me. Just think—Grandmother will be a great grandmother in a month. She looks it too, she hardly leaves her room any more. They have a nurse for her now."

"Add Gladys?" "Gladys was nice and sulky by turns. She liked the things I took for the baby—they couldn't get angora wool in Norris City, so she liked the fuzzy stuff of it, and the bath thermometer with babies painted on it. And she was nice when she was about the baby, or the house—they'd been building an addition for the nursery, you see."

"When Aunt Maude wanted to see my dresses, and I showed them particularly that kimono you gave me, she got cross. I put on the white organdy with the big band of fllet Sunday and Gladys wasn't nice at all. Father and I went for a walk after supper, and Morton said he would come and she was very angry—she couldn't go of course, and she wouldn't let Morton go beyond the gate of the near field."

Gloria laughed again, and persisted. "How about Morton?" "Oh—that's quite all over. After George and all these others, he was stupid and dull."

"So you admit now you would have been unhappy?" "No—for I wouldn't have known what any other life was I would have been worse than now, and he would have been better. He's gone back so, settled down like an old man, already. He's."

"She never finished for the bell rang and she rose to answer."

"She signed for what seemed a telegram, and carried it to Gloria, who opened it as casually as she opened all telegrams. Then she let it flutter to the floor."

"Good God," she murmured. "Frank's dead and Santley's cabled it to me."

GEORGE ADVISES Chapter 67 At first Pan looked at Gloria speechless. She had never seen her like this.

For Gloria who rarely had much color, had gone such a curious white. Probably she seemed whiter than she was, because of the contrast of her black hair and eyes. And there she stood in her gauzy and beautiful negligee, the yellow telegram at her feet, and that curious set expression.

"I'm not going to faint—not this time. He's made me faint at various times during his life, his death won't have that effect."

"Nevertheless, she took the bottle and sniffed at it. Pan thought black coffee might help. Gloria could rave like a wild flower when it rains, with the aid of a little coffee. She was, like all volatile people, too easily stimulated."

"So the girl went back to the kitchen. The cook had long since retired to bed and her not too gentle snores came through the thin door of her room. Pan stirred coffee, making it doubly strong. She went back and slipped into Frankie's room to see if she was asleep, and to see if he had kicked off his covers.

"Poor Frankie," she thought. "Will he be sad because of his father's death? But of course he won't, how could he, couldn't possibly remember him? Children aren't conventional grown-ups."

"She wondered whether Gloria was conventional enough to feel she should miss Frank? If there was sorrow, it would be conventional sorrow, she was sure Gloria was too level headed for that. And she must hate him, he had been a brute."

"She glanced at the child again and went out. Frankie must have inherited his blonde hair from his father. His face was the shape of Gloria's he was not flushed and rosy as most children are when asleep, he was pale, and his little face looked half-worried."

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Back Provinces "WET" OR "DRY" OTTAWA, June 14.—A new bill to amend the Canada Temperance Act was given a first reading in the House of Commons tonight. This bill takes the place of one which was introduced earlier in the session and which was discharged from the order paper. The original bill dealt only with a request from British Columbia; the new measure meets the wishes of the authorities of Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

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