

# QUEER HEART

by LAURA GOODMAN SALVERSON

BRETTA had a reputation, not a bad one, nor yet a good one; a reputation nonetheless. It flared round her like the draperies of a scarlet woman, the thing itself flimsy enough, Brettta the real mystery. But, unlike the scarlet woman, she was quite unconscious of either reputation or mystery. Brettta was big and blonde, with a hearty laugh and a sound digestion—a great craft of a woman made to sail the stormy sea of life untroubled and unafraid. Imagination and morbid introspection did not worry her. The first she knew to be the province of poets and mountebanks, the second the rightful atmosphere of the clergy and the almshouse. Brettta, you see, was not stupid.

Oversize Venus though she was, Brettta had about her a strange something which women resented and men coveted. That is where the reputation came in. Brettta, the slow colossus, the firm thighed, and deep breasted, had wrung from romance its highest honor. For love of her a man had died! Not very nobly, it is true—it was said he had made a sorry mess of it—but death is death, and still lends a sombre dignity to all it touches. Brettta thought it very sad that Neils should have died so young. Poor Neils, he was so good at calling off square dances! But she attributed his demise to a bad liver, rather than to herself.

Because of this magnificent simplicity, the town might have forgiven her, had it not been for Karl Max. Now Neils, though a worthy enough creature, was, after all, only a brick mason, whereas Max was a University student from Copenhagen. That Karl Max should fall in love with Brettta right on the heels of the Neils business was past condoning.

Brettta, if you please, was only the hired help at Doctor Reisvold's! To be sure she was no mere maid—no one had maids in the West of those days—and the hired help had a status peculiar to the times. As the hired help Brettta ate with the family, sat in their pew on Sunday, and joined them in the parlor of an evening when Madam Reisvold darned the children's stockings and Doctor Reisvold smoked a heavy pipe and read the *Weekly News*. Doctor Reisvold was well on towards fifty and yet, to the horror of his faithful Emma, didn't he break out in colored neck scarfs a few days after Brettta's arrival! What the men saw in that gawk of a Brettta no woman ever comprehended.

Brettta was puzzled about it herself and this gigantic innocence saved her in the house of Reisvold. "Now it beats me," she confessed, smiling broadly upon her shriveled mistress, "what that Karl sees in me, Mrs. Reisvold. It does indeed. Me with no learning whatever and him so full of book lore it runs off him like hairs off a shedding goat." Now that,

Illustrated by CHARLES R. CHICKERING



Ole decided to join the household and so lend an air of respectability to a doubtful atmosphere.



Bretta, Mrs. Salverson's new and vivid heroine.

as Mrs. Reisvold said times without number, was exactly representative of Bretta; crude as a clown yet with no end of admirers. Nonetheless, the matrons of the town did not intend to let a man like Max throw himself away on a girl like Bretta. There was no real stigma attached to being a hired girl, but it was an unwritten law just the same that professionals must look higher when contemplating matrimony. And Karl was a University man and a budding poet.

In the meantime Bretta sang as she kneaded great pans of feathery dough with her capable hands, whisked out the family wash—Bretta always whisked through any toilsome task — stewed over the old fashioned range, or bathed the littlest children; sang in a hearty fishwife fashion, exulting in the mere fact of living. Bretta loved life and made no secret of it. She loved it so well she crowded with delight when the children devoured the sweets she made for dinner and clapped her hands when Doctor Reisvold demanded another chop. Pleasure dripped from her like rain from an eavestrough when the work of her hands gave joy to another.

This delight in giving comfort was the very mainspring of Bretta's existence and the magic that won the poet. His woe-begone expression, despite an affected nonchalance, at a concert given by the Good Templars, had caught at her heart strings. Bretta, metaphorically speaking, tucked him under her capable arm and introduced him to the other young men in the lodge. More, she brought him to the attention of Evar Ness, the editor of the *Scandinavian Weekly*. "Evar," said she, with no mock preliminaries, "Here's a smart young poet from Copenhagen. He'll be a great help to you on the paper. Its been sort of dull lately. But that's no wonder, you so overworked and kind of oldish. He's a smart young fellow, Evar, he told me so." That, too, was Bretta. Your opinion of yourself held good with Bretta.

KARL had none of the traditional earmarks of a poet. His hair lay sleek and close about his well shaped head, his shabby tie made no pretense to flowing, nor his rusty clothes to singular distinction. Yet in somewhat he ran true to form. His convictions were exactly what a poet's should be: The world did not appreciate him; his genius was wasted on the materialistic and brutal age; vulgarity and acrobatics, this alone tickled the fancy of a very common, "common people"; the nobler inspiration of the drama, the epic and high tragedy was shunned like poison. "These modern vulgarians care nothing about spiritual values and are dead to the world of thought," Karl told his Bretta gloomily.

"Well, yes," said Bretta, "poor things! But you will teach them, won't you Max?" (She always called

him Max as if to compromise with courtesy and friendliness). Then followed more confessions. Karl admitted a thorough willingness to uplift his fellow countrymen, but how was it to be done? All day he worked at unfamiliar tasks for a mere pittance and at night he was so weary that the great thoughts refused to correlate—sometimes to come at all. And no matter how hard he worked, did he succeed? He had tried selling groceries with small success. And when he had worked on the street cars hadn't it been even worse? Now it was a coal wagon. Could Bretta conceive of the torture in driving a coal wagon from one dumpy house to another, for a bronze medalist from the elegant University of Copenhagen? Bretta thought she could and it roused her to immediate action.

Karl Max was not to do such a thing for another single day! She would not have it. Why, the mere thought of a possible poet laureate driving a coal wagon through the streets was a disgrace. But, if the settlement failed in its responsibility, she, Bretta, must assume the obligation for she at least had been happy here. She had a hundred dollars saved from her wages. A hundred dollars could stretch a long way in those days for board and lodgings—Karl Max should have it to support him while he wrote his masterpiece.

Karl was very grateful, very touching in his expression of it—so touching in fact that the protective walls of caste crumbled to nothing and Bretta, the rustic benefactress, became Bretta his love—his ideal woman. And Bretta, adjusting her goodly proportions to the graceful sweep of his arms, considered the money well spent.

WHEN Karl began indulging in his new freedom he let it be understood that on occasion a small stipend was sent to him by a patron of the arts. Not much, but yet enough to make ends meet; enough, thanks be, to enable him to record his impressions and opinions of this new country with its complexity of peoples and raw bucolic pride. Consequently, as might have been expected, people began commanding Karl's astuteness. A wise one that young Max. No loafer he, no mere visionary!

Karl's linen too began to improve, was always immaculately laundered as a gentleman's should be. That Bretta washed and ironed and mended these appendages of gentility after the doctor's family had retired, none knew, of course. Bretta, who crooned to herself happily as she got up the gloss on her Max's collars by lamplight, in the doubtful comfort of the cellar, saw no need of telling. But as Karl rose in the estimation of his compatriots, their criticism soared likewise. How was it that a man of his talents chose to waste his time on a simple country girl like Bretta? Bretta, who, if the truth were told, shifted her affection as often as fancy wavered. Hadn't she betrayed poor Neils and played fast and loose with Vilmar Kranberg? It wasn't as if they were objecting to Bretta because of her humble origin only. No. It was her deplorable lack of discretion. She gambled through human affections as heedlessly as a puppy sporting in a basket of wool!

Meanwhile, obvious of these unflattering opinions, Bretta basked in the glow of Karl's enthusiasm. He was writing a book and Bretta heard it unfold with the naive pride of a parent. She laughed and she wept and she criticized; not learnedly to be sure but out of her big human heart. "Now, Karl," she would say patiently, like a mother righting her offspring after a fall, "if she hated him she'd not say it like that. She'd give him the edge of her tongue—that is, if she had any sense at all."

Often enough he laughed at her and sometimes his flesh would creep at her peasant crudities, but he had genius enough to recognize an incorruptible sincerity. Besides, laugh as he might, something about her held him captive, some intangible quality not to be defined in terms of sex.

Bretta had never troubled to define her "rights". To love, to serve, this gave her joy and there was the end of it. That society tagged an obligation to every act did not worry her. Like nature, her moods were permanent in service only. She had been fond of Neils and had given him her unstinted friendship. But why should that have kept her from going to Kranberg when his greater loneliness called her? Not that Bretta analyzed her actions in any such cold-blooded fashion—it is difficult to delineate her she was so complete a law unto herself, moving as impulse swayed her and this impulse hot from the heart yet strangely impersonal.

When Bretta thought of Neils at all it was with the fond regret of a mother for a departed prodigal. As for Kranberg—well, she had tided him over a friendless period. When he called to rebuke her for faithlessness, she resolutely shut the door in his gloomy face. "Begone now, Vilmar," she told him patiently, "I've another to do for now. You'll manage nicely without me." There again you have Bretta; honest with the honesty of hail and sunshine.

KARL MAX had good stuff in him. He worked like a Trojan that winter and just before Easter he got his reward. A publisher in Copenhagen accepted his manuscript. Jubilant, he rushed to her.

"Bretta! Bretta!" he cried. "It's come! It's come at last! I'm on my way to fame and fortune!"

"Well, now! And will you be going back?" asked Bretta, putting aside her work-basket with steady fingers. Foolishly dashed, Karl suffered a swift reaction. "Perhaps," he returned slowly, a dull resentment stirring in his mind. "Yes—I suppose it may come to that . . . yes, and what then?"

"'Tis your clothes I'm thinking about," said the practical Bretta, "you'll be needing new underwear, Max, and linen. I'd hate to have the laundresses gossiping about your shirts." Her concern was so real that he laughed a bit ruefully, however.

"Oh, Bretta, Bretta, you're no end of a riddle! Upon my soul, I believe you'd never shed a tear if I left tomorrow. Honestly, I sometimes think it isn't myself you love, but the trouble I give you, queer heart that you are!"

Bretta gathered him to her warm arms by way of contradiction. And, as always, irritation, doubt, worry, and nervous weariness were swallowed up in the great calm of her rich personality. Bretta did not tease and tantalize—Bretta rested and revived.

"Queer heart!" she crooned to herself. "Queer heart! I like that. Queer heart I am, dear Max. Queer, too, that it should make a pain in my breast, to think of all your money. Soon you'll not be needing me."

But there Bretta was mistaken. The book received high critical praise, but the financial return was pitifully small. Still, Karl was more than satisfied. The Copenhagen press had given him a column, and that was something not to be counted lightly. A fact duly appreciated by his countrymen in the Canadian West. Instantly he was hailed as the lion of the hour. The Unitarians and the Lutherans forgot their bitter differences and united in giving a banquet in his honor.

What a dinner that was to be sure. A memorable event even if Tavia Kirkvold had not entered into it. Unfortunately, she did, to the tune of Ole Bull's "Chalet Girl's Sunday", which she sang like an angel—or so it seemed, to the impressionistic Karl. Honest Bretta paid a tribute to the pretty singer's art with a shining tear, but later she frowned at the dark, elfin Tavia, when her tinkling laughter filtered to her. Sharp needle-pointed darts of ridicule and cruel satisfaction flashed in and out of that silvery mirth. Laughing at everything and everybody without kindness!—that is how Bretta summarized her resentment.

As might be expected, Mrs. Reisvold interpreted the matter otherwise, when Karl began spending his evenings at the Kirkvolds. She hoped it would be a

MANY MEN HAD LOVED AND SOME HAD NEEDED HER, AND TO BE

lesson to Bretta, the silly creature! A piety wasted on good Doctor Reisvold, who assuaged his conscience by giving Bretta a five pound box of chocolates. Bretta munched the sweetmeats in the privacy of her little room, and patiently bided her time. Instinct told her Karl was not off her hands as yet.

**I**N the meantime, the young author sat at the feet of Tavia, re-hashing in troubadour fashion his old verses, and while she sang, dreaming a dozen others. Yet somehow they never materialized. Tavia ate into his mind like a burning fever. When he left her he could think of nothing but her black eyes and cool virgin graces. And when he was with her she taunted him to frenzy—letting him kiss her, crush her, she eluded him nonetheless, and left him unsatisfied. Untouched by his passion she laughed her tinkling laughter. "Love?" Oh, love was very well, said Tavia, but art was better. When he had really made his mark in the world it was time enough to speak of love.

Impeccable logic yet it left him cold. In a welter of resentment and wounded pride he began to remember and to long for the solace of Bretta's warm bosom. The more he thought of her goodness the less possible it seemed to meet her face to face. And then, to cap the climax, he found himself overdrawn at the bank. In a panic Karl wired to his publishers asking for a small advance on the forthcoming new edition of his book and, thanks to that Copenhagen press review, and the newly expressed pride of the University in their erstwhile student, he got it. With this cheque in his pocket he once more approached the seductive Tavia. He was going into the solitude to wrestle with his genius, he told her a trifle wildly; he was going to lead a hermit's life denying himself all luxuries and pleasure in order to write and rewrite and write again so that eventually he would wring from life a crown suitable to lay at her little feet. Tavia pecked at his cheek for the lovely compliment. When he was gone she laughed to herself, shrugging her pretty shoulders — men were so very odd, she decided graciously.

Karl had not been many days in his hermitage, a small two-room shack on the wind swept slopes of the Red River, before the town was buzzing with the delectable news that he was gone into seclusion to toil for Tavia's graces. It was the most romantic bit of gossip since the town's inception!

To Bretta it was a tragedy. Her Karl alone in a shack on the damp, wind-blown riverbank! Why, he would be sure to get rheumatism to say the least. And how could that helpless boy see to his meals? It was monstrous! What kind of heart had that Tavia to permit such a thing? Or, having permitted it, to do nothing to alleviate its lonely hardships? For one troubled month Bretta suffered her doubts in silence then, on a chilly night, she fled the house of Reisvold and on swift compassionate feet made her way to the isolated shack. She did not stop to rap. She opened the door softly and stood in the dark frame it made for her golden comfort like a goddess of homely felicity. And Karl, disheveled, distraught, bent over a paper-littered table, looked up to see her there. No anger, no rebuke; just the old warm concern and that ineffably rich smile met his shamed and startled gaze.

"Bretta, my God!" he gasped. "Bretta, is it really you?"

"Well, now," crooned Bretta, sweeping down upon him like a tidal wave, "well, now! And is this the way for a man to write a good book? Dust and ashes and cold . . . *Herra Gud!* Karl, have you been eating that mouldy bread? Why, it's a sickness you'll have, not a success!"

But Karl laughed as he had not laughed for many days; laughed with relief and rekindled assurance for he understood at last what this woman meant to

(Turn to page 26)

Bretta opened the door and with a glorious disregard of conventions, evil odors and gaping strangers, flew across the room to her Henri.



NEEDED, THAT WAS LIFE.

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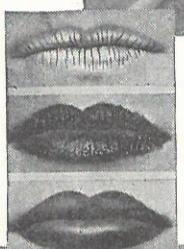
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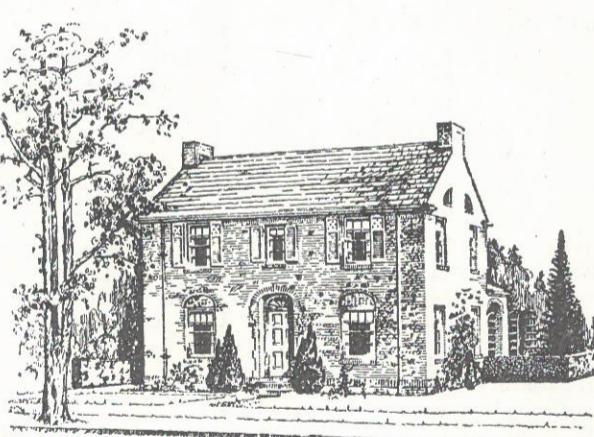
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### Some Bright Entertainment

"One New York Night" is bright and breezy, moving at a swift pace through a series of routine murder mystery episodes enlivened by the pretty dumbness of Una Merkel. Joe E. Brown's many fans from all walks of life who

roar at every wisecrack or platitude that emanates from his copious mouth, will love "Alibi Ike". It is a baseball yarn with some very funny dialogue by the late Ring Lardner, who has turned out some of the best. This picture introduces Oliva de Haviland to movie fans; her appearance in "Midsummer Night's Dream" is already creating wide interest.

## MOVIES IN TABLOID

### Drama

**SANDERS OF THE RIVER.** The problems of a British official in the heart of Africa, based on the African stories of Edgar Wallace. An outstanding dramatic presentation of one dominant white man among savages. Leslie Banks plays Sanders and is supported by Paul Robeson and Nina Mae McKinney. Not to be missed.

**THE CLAIRVOYANT.** Another sound British film with Claude Rains and Fay Wray, participating in a fake mind reading act, only to discover that Rains was clairvoyant. The result is a dramatic and satisfying picture.

**SHANGHAI.** A new version of the "East is East and West is West" theme. The love story of a white girl for the half caste son of an exiled Russian noble and a Manchu princess. A poignant love tale set in the Shanghai international settlement with Loretta Young and Charles Boyer in the lead.

**LUCKY IN LOVE.** Ricardo Cortez, graduate of the gas house district, finds himself wealthy but outside the social pale, and hires Henry Mollison to introduce him. There is romance in it, amusing situations and delightful settings.

**ESCAPADE.** William Powell with Luise Rainer, a German actress, in a romantic drama of Old Vienna days, and an atmosphere gay as a continental cocktail. Smart and quite sophisticated.

### Comedy

**GINGER.** Interesting human comedy that deals mainly with two children, portrayed by two remarkable child actors, Jane Withers and Jackie Searle. It is the story of a daughter of the tenements whose guardian, O. P. Heggie, goes to jail, leaving the girl to be adopted into a wealthy family dominated by Jackie Searle. The complications are evident.

**GOING HIGHBROW.** Well worn theme of the American millionaire and his wife trying to crash European society. Despite the familiar nature of the theme, Edward Everett Horton, as a society woman's manager contrives to get many laughs. Guy Kibbee and Zasu Pitts play the millionaires.

**ACCENT ON YOUTH.** Smart comedy farce with Herbert Marshall, a middle-aged playwright who thinks himself too old for romance, represented by Sylvia Sidney. Pleasant fare for adult audiences.

**LADY TUBBS.** Delightful farce comedy with Alice Brady as the rough and ready cook of a railroad construction camp who inherits money and goes to Long Island to spend it as Lady Tubbs. Hilarious fare.

### Musicals

**BROADWAY GONDOLIER.** Dick Powell as a taxi driver whose career shifts to Venice and the Grand Canal. As a Venetian singer he gets a role in New York. Pleasant comedy with plenty of music, Joan Blondell, Louise Fazenda and Adolph Menjou give adequate support.

**DANCE BAND.** Buddy Rogers in a British made musical. Bright, smart entertainment for the hot days.

**LOOK UP AND LAUGH.** Gracie Fields' latest production. Straight comedy and hilarious fun, with songs done in the best Gracie Fields manner.

**OLD MAN RHYTHM.** Buddy Rogers again, this time from Hollywood, with a musical show with a campus background.

**LOVE ME FOREVER.** Grace Moore repeats the great triumph of "One Night of Love," and sings much of "La Boheme". She is ably supported by Leo Carillo and the young English tenor, Michael Bartlett. This is a picture not to be missed.

### Thrills and History

**THE RAVEN.** A shudder film of the first water, full of weird and macabre situations, with Bela Lugosi as a demented surgeon genius. If you are a sensitive soul better stay away.

**HANDS OF ORLAC.** Romantic drama, replete with thrills. Again it has to do with a mad scientist and his startling and fiendish imagination. Only for those whose hearts are sound.

## QUEER HEART

(Continued from page 5)

him. She was his source of wisdom and his strength. She was the peace of life denied his restless spirit. Through her he tasted quietness and sanctuary from prying doubts and fears. Humor re-awakened, he watched her "whisking thing to rights".

"Bretta," curiosity drove him to ask, "just why did you come? It's a bit strange you know, considering what a rotter I've been."

"You ask it, Karl Max, and know what a state you are in? Oh, I'm ashamed to have waited so long, listening to the mean pride that was in me, and you needing me so sore."

Karl was in a worse state than even Bretta had anticipated. He had bargained with the proud young singer and he meant to win his wager. He had worked as never before yet in his heart he knew that all his effort had failed, his words were leaden, but he scribbled on, tortured by the ghastly fear that his creative genius was exhausted. Under the double strain his health, never too robust, began to suffer seriously. When Bretta found him he had a heavy cold with a dragging pain in the lungs.

Bretta promised to rid him of that in a hurry but by the next day when she reappeared with her simple remedies, Karl had developed a raging fever. Back she flew to the Reisvolds. Fortunately, Doctor Reisvold was at home. Bretta burst upon him in the seclusion of the living room like a veritable tornado.

"Doctor! Doctor!" she spoke sharply. "Quick now, here's your coat, your hat,

your ulster and rubbers. *Herra Gud!* Don't stare at me. Get into your things—oh, he's like to die before you get there, quick, I say! It's my Max—sick of a fever in that dirty shack his love sent him to."

Fever he surely had and typhoid at that. Hot, stinging tears rolled unheeded down Bretta's smooth white cheeks at the sound of that ominous word. "Typhoid fever! Oh, Doctor Reisvold, my own sweet mother died of it, that dreadful sickness—but he shan't die—no, no, I won't let him!"

**N**OR did she. No argument could in the least sway her resolution. She was determined to nurse Karl herself. On no account would she permit him to be resigned to that shambles they called a hospital. Never. She was strong, fearless and healthy and apt. Whatever must be done she could do a hundred times more conscientiously than a stranger. Doctor Reisvold knew that she spoke the truth and giving way to her desire did all he could to stem the tide of criticism that descended upon her impetuous head.

"Shameless, that's what it is!" said his wife, "just hopeless! Fancy flinging your self at a man like that after he has openly deserted you. What's more, Doctor Reisvold, don't imagine I'll be persuaded to let her enter my house again!"

Doctor Reisvold had the pleasant duty of passing on this intelligence. He squirmed under Bretta's honest eyes

during the confession and to his added discomfort discovered that she was smiling at him.

"Well, now," her slow voice was like a caress, gentle and consoling, "well, now, Doctor dear, you're sorry for me. But think, is it a trouble do you suppose to care for my Max? Why it's like a joy so fine that my heart seems fit to burst."

Thus simply Bretta took up her life with Karl, her stay destined to be longer than even she had dreamed. The typhoid over, it was discovered that Karl's lungs were slightly affected. It was then that Bretta dressed in her best and went to see Tavia Kirkvold. Miss Kirkvold consented to the interview from curiosity rather than anything else. When Bretta confronted her in the prim elegance of the music room, it was as if the wide outdoors had suddenly burst upon her. Bretta, big and golden, absorbed the atmosphere. And, despite her limited sensibilities, Tavia had forced upon her understanding the disagreeable conviction that in her overwhelming femininity Bretta possessed a power as old and as potent as the earth.

Bretta, on the contrary, beheld with quickening pity a young lady irresolute, snobbish and woefully lacking in those gentle qualities she imagined her birthright. Bretta's queer heart melted.

"Well, now," she smiled, "you'd not be fit for much in the care of a bad sickness. Poor soul, like as not you knew it."

Miss Kirkvold tossed her black head. "Just what do you want, Miss—er—sorry but I don't seem to remember your name?"

Bretta brushed this aside with an impatient gesture. "Smartness, Miss Kirkvold, ain't worth much in times of trouble. I ask you plainly are you or are you not going to take care of Karl Max while he's sick?"

"Why! How dare you ask me such a thing—a girl like you!"

Bretta was not always patient. With the soft, gliding agility of an irate tiger, she sprang at the astonished singer and shook her soundly. "You silly little fool," cried she, "to spit at me for coming to give you back your Max, straight from such a sickness. Where's your smartness in that, I ask; to take for anger what I do for good? I'm not holding it against you that you love Max. A nice boy, but needing milk and eggs and a woman's care just now, not songs. Do you, or don't you do it?"

Tavia wrenched herself free. "Oh, you dreadful creature," she shrieked, "do you suppose I'll have anything to do with him again? I could die for shame to think I ever listened to his flattery. A man who, most likely, said the very same things to you."

"Well, yes," Bretta agreed amiably, "they all say about the same things—"

"Oh, I'll not listen any more," interrupted the angry Tavia. "Keep your Max and tell him for me that if he made the biggest success on earth I'd not have him now!"

Bretta laughed softly. "Oh, no, I'd not tell a sick man such a thing—especially one to dwell on fancies. Oh, no. But I'll care for him with a freer mind since I'm not stealing the privilege from one who ought to do it."

BRETTA returned to Max with a light heart and a clear conscience. To say that she was ostracized in the months that followed would not be strictly true. To be ostracized the offender must accept his ostracism. Bretta did no such thing, probably not even dreaming that such an abject state existed. Kind hearts. That's what ailed them, thought Bretta. They were "feeling" for her and didn't want her to know it! Well now, she righted that quickly. She needed no pity but Max

did need little comforts; poor boy, slaving away at his book. And Bretta was nothing if not resourceful. With scarcely any money to support her household, she decided that Karl's milk and eggs must come from other sources. Now Vilmar Kranberg, whose courtship had been so ineffectual should have the honor of supplying the invalid. Why, of course, Vilmar kept a thriving dairy on the south banks of the river and none knew better than she how really generous he was. How fortunate he should have loved her! Life was full of pleasantries all round, thought Bretta.

Poor Vilmar, how should he withhold hospitality to such an appreciative guest? In a twinkling Bretta was over the threshold and clapping her hands in delight at his neat little house. And then she perceived Dame Kranberg stitching by the window. Bretta flew across the sanded floor and taking the old lady's wrinkled hands in her own pressed them to her soft young cheek.

"Why Vilmar," she chided, "why didn't you tell me you had such a sweet old mother and me just dying to knit slippers for Christmas and none to use them seeing I've slipped all my friends. Shame on you, Vilmar! A sweet old mother like this all to yourself and me losing mine in typhoid when I was twelve, Ja, good mother, God gave me a reason to hate that sickness, you see."

Mother Kranberg saw, and much else besides. After which the little matter of milk and eggs was easily adjusted. Vilmar would be only too glad to bring what the invalid needed every morning—his route led nearby anyway, and in turn Bretta promised to relieve Mother Kranberg of the knitting and mending.

"Of course. And on Saturday's I can just as well do the baking."

How to go about ostracizing such a woman was beyond the towns-people. In the end they were forced to take her at her own valuation. Her encounter with the pastor was fairly typical when, self-conscious, but duty bound, he visited the unorthodox dwelling. Spring was well away and Bretta, her smooth throat bared to the winds, her golden hair blowing, her arms bare to the shoulder, was spading up a patch of earth before the minute porch. Through the open window the pastor saw Karl bent above his writing table.

Bretta dropped her spade and flew to welcome the visitor. "Well, now, and if it isn't pastor Bjerke himself," she greeted him gaily. "How kind! And isn't it a sun we have this day, bright as the saints in paradise, and all the little worms so wriggly with the joy of living."

Pastor Bjerke found his errand grown exceedingly difficult; quite impossible, in fact.

"Well, Bretta," he began, smiling stiffly, "I'm glad to find our friend so much better. We can't afford to lose our talented young men . . . we owe you much, Bretta. Devotion like yours is rare. Yes indeed! But then, my dear child—er—that is, public opinion is something else again."

Bretta's hearty laughter cut him short. "Well, now, how good you are, Pastor Bjerke, to feel for me. But it isn't as if I needed a single thing."

"But my child—forgive me if I mis-judge you—considering the ways of the world, wouldn't marriage be the happiest solution in your case? After all, we must respect the conventions."

"Why bless your kind heart," Bretta beamed at him, "it's quite as I've often said. You're a good man, Pastor, but not such a thinker. Now, as you say, marriage is well enough in its place but I ask you what has my poor Max to do with a wife? Him that's still in consumption and perhaps not after making a success for years to come, writing being such a queer business. Why, you

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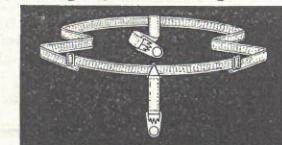
The sheerest dress, the closest-fitting gown reveals no tell-tale lines. What an aid to self-confidence and poise. The ends of Kotex are not only rounded, but flattened and tapered besides. Absolute invisibility—no tiny wrinkles whatsoever.

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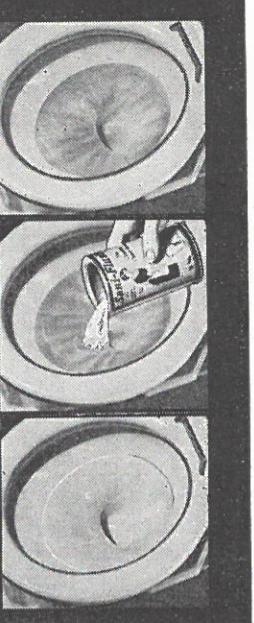
The new Kotex Wonderform Belt is conveniently narrow, easily adjustable to fit the figure, self-balancing. The patented clasp does away with pins. Yet this remarkable belt does not only offer you greatest convenience and comfort—it gives amazing value . . . the price is 25¢ very low, only 25¢



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sign



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can see for yourself that a wife would be nothing but a hindrance. Pshaw, you must know, Pastor Bjerke, a man like Max would take it hard if his wife had to lack for anything."

SUMMER had bloomed and gone and Karl was far on the road to recovery when Bretta's sole relative, a younger brother, descended upon them like a whirlwind. Ole Hugdal was as fiery as his sister was coolly placid. And now he was angrier than ever before in his stormy life. Bretta's scandalous behaviour had been flung in his teeth as soon as he returned from the Far North where he had been trapping. A fine piece of news to be sure! Ole flew into a man-sized rage, mauled and bedeviled the luckless talebearer and, Berserk fashion, tore off to settle with Bretta. As has been said, Bretta was a craft to weather stormy blasts. Ole's thunderous entry was something of an unexpected broadside but she soon swung to taking the assault head on and colors flying. A resolute golden Medusa, she planted herself between the angry visitor and the startled author, while Ole roared him into helpless submission.

Throughout his incoherent raging Bretta beamed upon him with tolerant motherly amusement and when he ran down for lack of further adjectives and necessary wind, she bridged the awkward gap with a ripple of gay laughter.

"Well, now! To think it's my little Ole, roaring and ranting like an angry lion. But you always had a bit of a temper, Ole dear. Now then, take off that crazy cap and shake hands with Karl Max—a great writer, my Max, and going to be greater. He had the typhoid well, figure for yourself if I could let him die for lack of care like our dear mother. But pshaw, that's the matter with you men, thoughts come hard and blows easy. You can see for yourself there is nothing to be riled about."

But Ole was not so easily persuaded. He was still smarting from affronted dignity. Bretta bore with his second outburst patiently enough but Karl could restrain himself no longer. Indignation winged his imagination. Never had Bretta heard such a colorful denunciation nor had she even dreamed that Max was such a master of words. Ole was seventy-seven kinds of a devil, an evil minded roughneck and a worthless hound! He contaminated the very air she breathed and was not to be tolerated in the presence of his sister. To account for their relationship would tax the wisdom of the saints.

"Why, damn it all," he finished, "don't you suppose I'd have married Bretta if she'd have had it? Don't you suppose I know gold when I see it? Contemptible dog, don't you suppose I mean to do it despite her, just as soon as I'm sure of success?"

That was plain enough. Ole grinned his comprehension and when he grinned he was so like Bretta that it ended the matter. In fact, he decided to join the household. It would help with the expenses and lend an air of decency to a doubtful atmosphere.

He stayed throughout the summer and grew reconciled to much that in the beginning had displeased him. It was difficult for Ole just at first to think very respectfully of a man who earned his living scribbling nonsense on paper, but in the end he conceded that Karl was a decent sort and a gentleman. Indeed, to his cronies, he went one better and stated boldly that Max was a genius as anyone could see by his impracticality and uselessness. And sometimes these friends of Ole's drifted to the cottage where their crude pleasantries and cryptic definitions of life proved a gold mine to the pale young man who had learned to endure for Bretta's sake—

Bretta, that irresistible magnet for every lonely male heart!

IT was late fall when Karl's manuscript was sent away, and while he waited in nervous apprehension for his criticism, Ole began to make ready for his return north. He had a new partner for the coming season, a young Frenchman who had worked an independent trapline the winter before, but had found the experience too lonely and the fur company's opposition too bitter. Henri Leduc was a handsome rascal, brown as a nut and straight as the timbers of his native province. Care sat lightly upon him now that he was back in the land of men, and laughter rippled over his sound white teeth with the reckless abandon of mountain rivers.

"A gay one, that Henri," said Ole. "A great comrade, but no hand to hang on to money. The dance halls and the women get it too easily."

Bretta was curious about him and when they met the heart turned over in her breast. That nice boy to be the victim of women! That dancing-eyed symbol of mirth to be reduced to want by the selfishness of her sex. As for Henri, the sight of Bretta's golden mellowness, her flawless white skin that refused to lose its loveliness, no matter how she abused it, her gracious bosom and wide, violet eyes, that smiled upon the world in rich affection, struck him dumb with wonder. And Henri was not a man to fall speechless in the company of women.

Nor did Bretta permit him the privilege for long. But stranger than his new shyness was the fact that before a week had passed all his history and most of his sins were in her keeping. Poor Henri, if ever a man needed a good woman's care it was he, so thought Bretta. And when the time came for his departure he had promised faithfully to stay clear of ancient temptations. Already Bretta had plans for a homestead in the new Saskatchewan country.

"Well then, Henri," Bretta enjoined in parting, "you'll do well to stay close to Ole, for it's a bold woman would smile on him twice. Mind your step, Henri, and it's myself will see to your money when you come back."

AS the weeks went by, and one fine morning Karl received word that his book would soon be on the bookstands. A splendid manuscript, said the publisher, destined to increase his standing and renown. Bretta was elated, but, practical as usual, voiced the fervent hope that something more than honor would be his reward.

"A man working with death at his shoulder, like you did," said she, "deserves more than praise in the newspapers."

And, for once, fortune, so seldom kind to struggling genius, reversed her tactics. Karl's book received a storm of criticism, good, bad, and worse, from every paper and periodical in the Scandinavian capitol. It was a scandalous book! A dangerous book, and a suggestive book. Because of these charitable pronouncements, the book sold faster than the printers could turn it out. Consequently, springtime found Karl not only greatly improved in health, but rich in a small way. The knowledge staggered Bretta. The great roll of unfamiliar bills he thrust into her hands one day frightened her. What was she to do with so much money? Karl laughed at her bewilderment, and kissed her puzzled eyes.

"Buy clothes," he suggested, "clothes fit for your regal beauty. Now I wonder if you've really any idea what a gorgeous creature you would be dolled

up in fine feathers? Why not try the experiment for my sake?"

Woman through and through, Bretta was delighted at the game he proposed, and when he pronounced himself satisfied it would indeed have been difficult to find a flaw in the beautiful creature that smiled back at Bretta from her new bevelled mirror. Bretta frankly laughed at herself, enjoying her glorified reflections as she might have enjoyed a play, and Karl was more than ever intrigued with her. Somewhere later he took her to Chicago to see the sights of that vast city and to meet the only relatives he had in the Western Hemisphere. Bretta loved it all. But when she was back and had to sit with idle hands in the beautiful house that Karl had chosen for her and let a stranger do all the familiar tasks, the joy went out of her heart. Karl watched her, speculative and curious. He loved her, this elemental woman, no doubt of that. Loved her and grew strong in her love; but understand her he could not—till years later and then the understanding made him great indeed.

ODDLY enough it was the announcement of Tavia's wedding in the morning paper that reminded Karl of the obvious fact that he had not made good his promise to Ole. They were at breakfast, a dainty breakfast that was wormwood to Bretta, for her hands had had no part in its making.

"Bretta," he teased her, "why so glum? Are you weary of your temperamental poet?"

Bretta sighed. "Do you like it?" she returned. "This life, this living like a cat on a cushion? This doing nothing?"

He stopped her words with happy kisses. "Queer heart, surely you've done enough for one little lifetime. You shall slave no more. This winter we'll go to Copenhagen. Oh, Bretta, there's a city for you! Full of gaiety and riches and ancient grandeur. But, darling, what I was really thinking is this: Ole will hang me on the highest tree if he finds us still without benefit of clergy. When will you marry me, Brett?"

"No, no!" she cried, pushing him from her. "Don't speak of it, Karl. It scares me. And Copenhagen, a city full of elegant ladies . . . You'd want me there. No! Don't speak of it yet!"

Karl teased her into a happier frame of mind, laughing at her queer notions, but something plaintive in her usually brisk voice troubled him vaguely. Could it be possible that she was unhappy in her new freedom? Could it be possible that this new life with him frightened her?

It was thus Ole found them. None-the-less, awed by Karl's new affluence, he refrained from unhappy references. Bretta flamed into former liveliness at sight of her brother, though it seemed to him that her solicitations were all for the absent Henri. She was full of questions. Where was he? How had he fared? Don't let her hear that he had again fallen prey to some designing woman! Ole shrugged. Henri was all right in his way, a good enough comrade, and all that, but like butter in the hands of the ladies.

"Ole, you never had much sense," she shot at him, "but at least you could have kept an eye on Henri. How dared you return without him?"

Ole's heavy face flushed red. "Sense? What the devil's the good of sense when it comes to keeping a Frenchman from flying after petticoats? Sense! Ja, that's a good one!"

By some ugly magic Bretta compressed her lovely mouth into a cruel line. "Ole Hugdal," she threatened him, "I'll not put up with funny talk. Tell the truth. You made a promise."

"He's sick," barked Ole, slumping

into a chair, outdone and defeated. Now he was in for it, he thought. Now she'd rave indeed. But Ole did not know the woman who was his sister. A strange light leaped into her eyes, the ecstasy of saints before an ordeal, and the soft glow, habitual to her homely face, struck out anger. Pity, like a warm wind, sang in her voice.

"Sick . . . my poor Henri! Sick, and I stand here wrangling. Sick, and most likely alone. Ole, I'm sorry, poor brother, I shouldn't act so toward you—and where did you say he was?"

"Now don't take on," groaned Ole, mopping a troubled brow, "it's nothing to speak of, a bit of a wound and a touch of fever. A fight—that's what did it, if you must know. A fight and a fool girl. Let me tell you I'm not surprised myself considering the way Henri carried on—"

"Yes, yes," Bretta interrupted impatiently, "but where is he?"

"At Cushacks," growled Ole, "at Cushacks up on the 'Y'."

Bretta gasped. "At Cushacks? Those awful Cushacks with the dirt of Russia still thick on them? You tell me calmly that a sick man is at the Cushacks?"

Perhaps it was as well that Max was not at home — perhaps. At least it proved fortunate for Henri. Bretta did not stop to hear the rest of Ole's harangue. Henri must be saved! Henri must not be left to languish at the Cushacks, nor be permitted to fall into the clutches of some crafty female. Ole might as well have reasoned with a Valkyrie. What did she care for words? What did she care if foolish anger choked him? What did Ole and his high sounding commands mean to her anyway? Or Karl—poor Karl, lost in his dead world of books. Oh, they were sufficient to themselves, her roaring brother and the dreamy poet. But Henri was hurt, and among strangers. And such strangers! Bretta's heart pounded like a defective pump at the thought of it, and Ole's attempt to bar her way was a ludicrous failure.

"Woman, you're crazy!" he bawled after her. "You'll not get away with such doings a second time. Bretta, Bretta, you can't do this to Karl!"

Quite possibly she never even heard him, her heart was so brimming with joy at the thought of the task before her.

THE Cushacks were a grimy lot, but, as Ole maintained, kindly in their slovenly fashion. Cushack himself was a human gorilla, short, thick-set, long armed, with a head like an elongated bullet jutting out from his powerful shoulders, and like a gorilla, he grunted and grimaced. Mrs. Cushack — "Ma Cushack" — was a good-natured atrocity, fat, shapeless, a fleshy bag animated by various and sundry emotions. There were eight little Cushacks, and, curious to relate, all of them good to look at. Sound little imps with black heads and merry snapping eyes. They were all very dirty and all very loving and religious to a fault.

In this hothouse of virtue, smelling strongly of garlic, stale cabbage and the glory of God, poor Henri tossed on a dingy couch cursing human frailties and the bagatelle of love's favors; cursing folly and sighing for lost adventure. How had it happened, he wondered . . . such a little drink—such a little dance—such a little girl—And then that ragging devil! What had it all been about, anyway? He hadn't wanted Bernadette. She danced—ah yes, divinely; and her kisses were like hot little stings on the mouth. But she was Bernadette. He hadn't wanted her! All his dreams, all his thoughts had been of Bretta, of that soft-eyed golden woman in the poet's house. Devil take all poets! Devil take all women—devil take him, too!

Ma Cushack groaned in despair. Crazy, that's what he was. Crazy, but oh so beautiful, like the Holy Anthony in the Moscow Cathedral. Horspidy! What a pity. Would he have soup, she wondered, or a little rolled cabbage, maybe a little tea hot from the samovar? Henri would have nothing. Henri wanted to die!

Bretta thrust open the door and with a glorious disregard of conventions, evil odors and gaping strangers, flew across the room to her Henri.

"Well now, well now," she crooned on her knees by the rumpled cot, his hot hands in her own, her soft eyes beaming at him. "Well now, poor boy! What a place to find you, and you so ill!" Henri could have fallen down and worshipped her just then, all the angels of paradise shamed by her glory.

"Mademoiselle—*Mon Dieu!* Is it really you? Is it that most lovely lady? Is it the Bretta of my dreams?"

Bretta had no time for honeyed words, her quick eyes having measured the disorder of his bed not to mention the surroundings. She whirled upon Ma Cushack hovering by: "Ja, now we'll have water, Mrs. Cushack," she stated imperatively, but with a charming smile, "much water, dear Mrs. Cushack, and a little soap. I pay, oh yes, I pay for everything."

She had her way of course. And in a surprising little while the Cushack menage had an air and odor heretofore unfamiliar. Henri, rejuvenated by a somewhat similar magic, lay back relaxed, gloriously happy, never so glad to be alive. But alas, the most radiant moments come to an end. Having done her best for the time being, Bretta suddenly remembered Karl and the house on Lansdown Avenue, the wonderful house Love had built for her, and her spirits sank. For the first time Bretta perceived that life was not the simple business she had imagined.

Henri's eyes bruised and bored into her soul. The look in them hurt her with an actual physical pain, like an agony. Henri needed her . . . The mute, frightened plea back of the rapture in his shining black eyes betrayed him. Oh yes—he needed her . . . she knew; and to be needed was that not life?

He was watching her, dejection crowding out joy. Poor boy, he would be so lonely. He needed cheering. She smiled at him. "Now Henri," she rebuked him gently, "you needn't look so glum for you're better already. And remember, no funny business. No fighting — no dancing either. Not a whirl. Not for a month at least. And now I must hurry."

Henri groaned like a rusty hinge. "*Mon Dieu*, it is always thus—Heaven is so short-lived, and Hell yawns forever! Must you go, *mon ami*, so soon? Must you go, and take all joy away with you?"

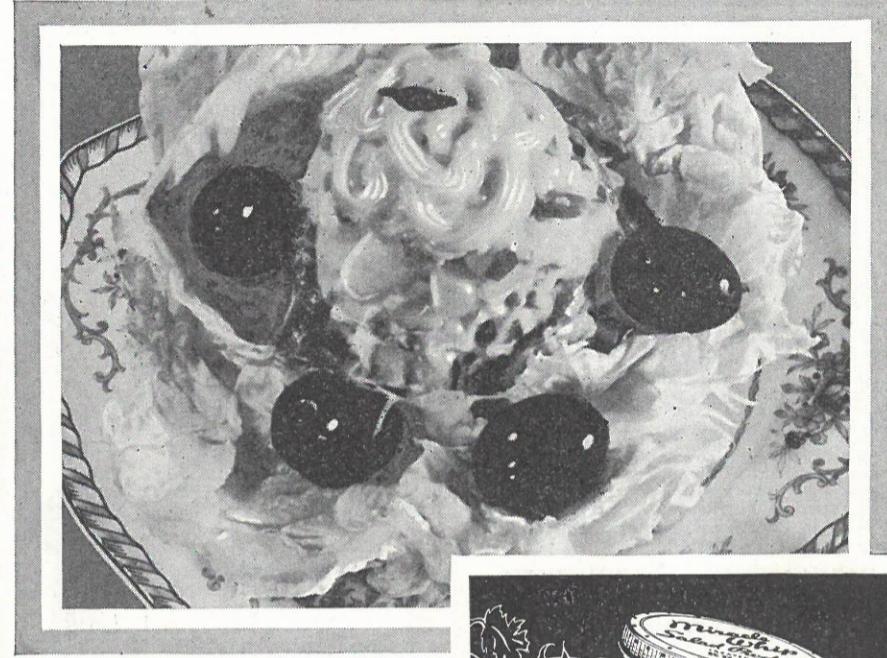
Bretta held up her hand. "Henri, don't say it! You mustn't!"

He laughed, recklessly, roughly. "Mustn't! Mustn't! And who behaves as he should? Not Henri Leduc, the crazy Frenchman! You think perhaps that I forget—did forget? O Bretta, all winter I dream of you, think of you, long for you. Is that forgetting? and my heart is Hell, for thinking of that poet, that Max, whose love you are! But yes, what remains then, but to dream and despair?" He laughed again, bitterly. "And dance a little! Thoughts, thoughts, till I think I shall go mad in the big white silence, and I drink to forget—No matter, always like birds in spring my dreams come back at dawning—my dreams of you, Bretta, in the great Saskatchewan—of you and me in the land of the big prairie. The big, unshackled prairie stretching like a brown sea to the skies, where the wild

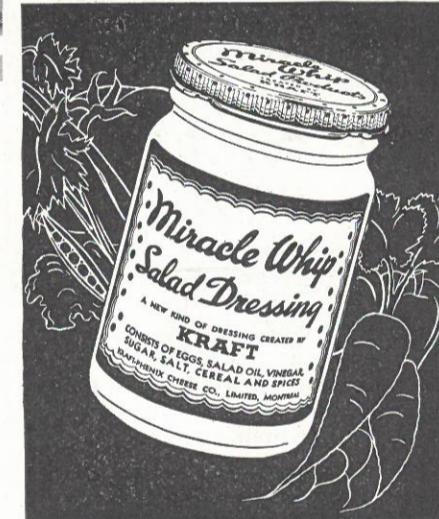
(Turn to page 31)



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## QUEER HEART

(Continued from page 29)

geese circle, and the winds come singing of the great hills beyond where the rivers run in a silver highway, and the poplars make a leafy oasis for the tired adventurer. A friendly land, *mon ami*, the land where I am going—a land for the young, and the strong, and the brave. A lonely land, too, *cherie*, waiting through the years for its great mothers and its little children—”

Bretta's eyes caught Henri's, and a flood of emotion she had never before experienced swept over her beautiful body. She stopped bewildered, for once uncertain of herself, one capable hand pressed to her heart as if to restrain its wild beating. Oh, it hurt her, hurt her, hurt her, that look in his eyes.

“Bretta, you will come again?” he pleaded. “You will come tomorrow?” Oh, but that Henri knew how to plead. He needed her! Yes, yes, but Max—what of Max? Was he really safe? Would he go on to his greater destiny without her? Dear Max, he was like a child at Christmas, forever expectant, his eyes uplifted to the stars and the stars were treasure-houses of rare dreams. But Henri—poor Henri, what had he to guide him? Pshaw, just a stumbling mischief was Henri, never growing up, forever getting hurt, forever needing comfort. Oh yes, she would come again. Ma Cushack, stupid, stolid, had been watching the two of them and incredible though it may seem a vast excitement shook her. Incredible yes—but Ma Cushack had once been young—young and comely, and she had had her dreams. Emitting sympathetic grunts she waddled to Bretta's side; placing a toil-ruined hand on her soft round arm: “Yes, yes . . . You come again,” she seconded Henri, “come again lady, to the so very sad poor fellow. Love, she is nice, eh?”

Bretta stared at Ma Cushack amazedly and deep in her expressionless eyes she discovered a gleam, an ancient something, primitive as the germ of life, mysterious as death and lovely as hope itself. Impulsive ever, she caught the greasy old woman to her breast kissing her warmly.

“Ja, sure,” Bretta laughed, lapsing into native parlance in the stress of her emotions, “sure, I come again.” Without another look at Henri, she fled into the night leaving Ma Cushack in a glorified daze. “Horspidy!” she muttered, a grimy paw pressed to a greasy cheek, “she is of the angels that sweet lady—glory be to God!”

Bretta, hurrying home through the darkness, had no comforting thoughts. She was troubled and torn with many doubts. How hard it was to make decisions.

She came at last to the pretty house Karl had bought for her. It seemed to leap out at her from the dense shadows as she rounded the bend in the road. So bright it was, every window lighted as if for a festival. Fear caught hold of Bretta like a clammy hand. These

lights, this shining white house, they frightened her. There was something arrogant and accusative about Karl's house. And he shouldn't be so extravagant with the lights! This homely prudent reflection steadied her. Pshaw, how foolish she had been to worry . . . Smiling, she turned into the gravel walk that led through the little garden to the kitchen door. What fun it would be to make a pan of biscuits and a pot of chocolate. Surely Karl would be pleased. But Karl was not pleased. Neither was he working. White with rage he waited for Bretta in the beautiful living room he had planned so carefully for her comfort.

Confused by the shock of his unexplained anger she faced him helplessly: “Why Max—Max dear—”

He fairly leaped at her his fingers biting into her arms. “In God's name, have you no sense of shame whatever? No prudence, common sense even? Have you no thought of what people say? No respect for your reputation, my reputation—our reputation? How dare you rush off on this mad errand to a place like that and to a man like Henri Leduc?”

Bretta wrenched herself free—not angrily but firmly. She was smiling now. Dear Max was troubled on her account! “Well, now, you needn't have worked up to such a state,” she reassured him. “It's all right. I'm home again quite safe. It's no distance to the Cushacks and for all they're not so fine they were very kind.”

Karl fairly snorted. “Bretta, for God's sake are you really such a fool or just an outright faithless woman. Oh, my dear, you must be mad. You don't seem to understand the danger of your strange beauty, the peculiar fascination you hold for men but which I fear will always make you prey to their selfishness.”

A fierce flame flared high in Bretta's deep violet eyes. “Karl Max, for shame! You ought to say that to me—the prey of men! You, a writer, to know so little.” Once again that ineffable quality of maternal tenderness crept into her voice, annihilating all anger. “Oh, Max, you've such a lot to learn, dear boy. Pshaw, do you really think a man can have of a woman what she will not give? You think that—believe that? No, no! A woman was not made for such poor ends. God made her to give, always. Not to take, nor to be robbed. God gave her so much so why shouldn't she give of her riches? Dear Max, you've given words to the thoughts that troubled me—in my heart I knew this always but couldn't say it somehow. Dear, dear Max, forgive me . . . forget me . . . and let me go!”

There, it was out. The shock of it petrified them both. Haggard and a little wild, they stared at each other. Max froze into a wretched shell, only his mind seemed hotly alive. And up from some fathomless depths of human

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Use Woodbury's Cold Cream several times a day for a clear, lovely complexion, free from blemishes and dryness. Jars, 50c, 25c, 15c. Tubes, 25c, 10c.

#### PROOF THAT THEY ARE GERM-FREE

**A** Ordinary Face Creams (A)—Microscope shows infectious germs, used in tests (see black spots). Note that they live in ordinary cream (light area). **B** Woodbury's (B)—No infectious germs can live in Woodbury's Germ-free Creams (see clear white area). Thus your skin is kept germ-free.

*Woodbury's GERM-FREE BEAUTY CREAMS*



#### SEND FOR WOODBURY'S "LOVELINESS KIT"

John H. Woodbury, Ltd., Dept. 1321, Perth, Ontario

Enclosed find 10c. Send me Woodbury's "Loveliness Kit" containing a guest-size cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap, tubes of Woodbury's Germ-free Cold and Facial Creams, and 6 packets of Woodbury's Facial Powder—one of each of the 6 fashionable shades.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

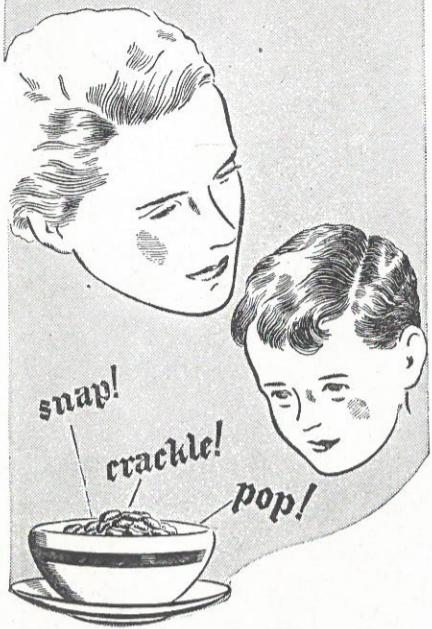
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• Avoid imitations. Look for head and signature, John H. Woodbury, Ltd., on all Woodbury products.

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to MILLIONS  
OF LISTENERS**



**Snap! Crackle! Pop! That's the speech Rice Krispies make from countless cereal bowls daily when milk or cream is poured on those crunchy, toasted bubbles.**

Children and adults welcome this cheery message of Rice Krispies and enjoy their delicious flavor. Mothers gladly serve Rice Krispies because they are so nourishing and easy to digest. When eaten at the nursery supper or for a bedtime snack they encourage sound sleep.

Grocers everywhere sell Rice Krispies in the Mother Goose story package that children love. The heat-sealed WAXTITE bag inside the package keeps Rice Krispies oven-fresh. Made by Kellogg in London, Ont.



**Listen!—get hungry**

woe, soared that ancient intolerance, peculiar to outraged masculine vanity.

"Bretta, I'll not let you do it! You're carried away by sympathy. It's ridiculous, absurd, impossible! It's criminal! Oh, Bretta, you can't do it. You can't make me a laughing stock by running after every sick hobo that happens along. By heaven, it's indecent!"

Red tides rolled up to the very roots of Bretta's shining crown of hair. "So! Was it crazy and indecent when I came to you, Karl Max?" she demanded on a note that frightened him more than all his ugly visions. He tried to laugh it off. Catching her hands in his and carrying them to his lips:

"Sweetheart—my dear, unreasonable darling, surely you love me? Surely, you cannot doubt my love? Surely you believe that all my thought in life is to make good because of your faith. Oh, Bretta, think how happy we will be in the great capitol, how proud you'll be of your Max!"

Bretta shivered. How extraordinarily hard it was to follow what seemed good. Max loved her—ah, yes, Max loved her. But he loved art more. Without her he could still go on to his greater destiny—perhaps because of that. While Henri—Henri just looked at her. And the stars and the rivers, the wind and the trees that sang so sweetly for Max were all in the light of her eyes. Tears dimmed her vision and with a pitiful cry she pushed Max from her.

"No, no, Max. Don't make it harder. I love you; I will always love you. But you don't need me now. How should I follow you, my Max, your simple Bretta? The high places of earth are not for me. That fine company of Copenhagen would frighten me . . . yet you will not forget me—your poor Bretta. You will forgive her. Some day maybe you will understand her. Oh

Max, dear, dear Max, it is like this, something in me would die if I break faith with my queer heart. Henri needs me. He is sick—he is poor—he is improvident! He will always need me."

Karl sank into a chair his eyes fixed upon her amazedly, hungrily, taking in every lovely detail; the beautiful head, the rich bosom, the faultless skin and wide violet eyes. And all this great loveliness, this sumptuous richness was to be wasted on a scapegoat nobody! Anger and despair pierced his heart but he kept back anger for he read the inevitable in her face.

"Bretta, Bretta!" he implored for the last time, "think well what it means, this choice . . . the difficulties and hardships; the bleak poverty . . .!"

At that she laughed in the old way. "Foolish one, don't you know even that little about me? Don't you know that it's only the hard things that call to me—like the stars to your dreamy eyes. Max dear, you see it's like this: God gave me so much vitality that idleness hurts me. Open the door for me, Max—and smile; smile at your Bretta, dear Max, and let her go quietly."

Max was a gallant gentleman. His smile was nothing much, it is true, but grace and courtliness clothed his act. In the doorway she paused one hesitant moment, troubled, irresolute. "It is the end, dear Max, you understand that, don't you—the very end. And you will forgive?"

Once again he kissed her hands, capable gentle hands, whose loveliness even labor seemed loath to destroy. "Forgive you, Bretta? Oh, my dear, would one presume to forgive the sun for shining? But no, it is not the end. Love such as yours suffers no forgetting . . . Tonight you have entered forever the high places of my heart."

#### NO SEX BAR

(Continued from page 2)

Friends. There were five daughters, every one of whom was a skilled seamstress, a good cook, an excellent housekeeper, besides being able to spin, weave, knit, and perform all the other branches of handicraft carried on under the parental roof in those days. In due course they all were married and carried on those industries under their husband's roof, besides bringing up their children "by hand". Today when one drives through that countryside one finds fruit canning factories on every hand, besides knitting mills, creameries, and cheese factories. In other words, all these industries have been taken out of the home, and women have been obliged to follow to the factory to make a livelihood. It would be cruel to debar them on account of sex. Indeed, no one talks about a charwoman losing her bloom or her womanliness by mingling with the world. It is only when women reach the better, higher paid positions that this dreadful fear arises.

If women are sent home, as advocated by Herr Hitler, Mayor Houde and Signor Mussolini, how are they to be maintained? Suppose a father has four daughters and that he is earning \$2,000 a year or less, how is he to support them. Age is inevitable, and with it a burden too great for one pair of hands, unhappiness, poverty, and bitterness is, too often, the lot of a family, forced to depend on one small purse. So this project, designed to protect men, would only react against them. Then too, if women are to be sent home, and their life confined to "kinder, kirche, kueche", as the former Kaiser of Germany maintained, it would seem to be only fair that they should be provided with husbands! Who could guarantee this or who undertake such a contract?

Some people wish to push women out of the arena for the alleged reason that they do not need the salary they are earning. In regard to this, I can say, after a long business and professional experience, that I have scarcely ever known a salaried woman who was not sharing her income with her father, her mother, her children or a disabled husband. Personally, I think that she has a right to the salary she earns whether she shares it or not, for it is only by long and patient endeavor that women achieve economic independence or a noteworthy position of any kind.

An eminent Freudian psychologist has said that self-preservation and procreation are the two great motivating factors in human progress. Granted that motherhood and fatherhood are the highest human experience and bring out the finest qualities of men and women—they are not all of life. Madame Curie, co-discoverer of radium, brought up two fine daughters, one talented in music, the other in science, but she carried on her scientific research with no less ardor for being a mother.

It is forty years since Philippa Fawcett, daughter of the blind Postmaster-General and his no less talented wife, won the double first in mathematics at Oxford. It is half a century since Catherine Booth worked side by side with her husband, General William Booth, in the slums of London. The Salvation Army is one of the few institutions in the world offering equal opportunities for women and one rejoices at the election of Evangeline Booth as General. In the orthodox churches no woman has been ordained to the ministry in the western world except Miss Maude Royden in England.

(Turn to page 35)

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