

Ten Cents

June, 1928

The Canadian

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Magazine

DEANE.

A Hugh C. MacLean Publication

More Than 53,000 Copies of This Issue Printed

Old "Gruff and Grum"

A
Picturesque
Figure
in
the
Latest
Story
of
**Frederick
B. Watt**

Watch for;
"O'Higgin's
Bier"

IN picking up the most recent issue of a very prominent United States magazine, I find the leading story to be by Arthur Hunt Chute, who is not only a Canadian but is aggressively proud of the fact. He hails from Wolfville, Nova Scotia, and is one of the Canadians who is making a substantial dint in the United States magazine field.

A little farther on in the same issue I come to the name of Frances Beatrice Taylor, whose name appears above as delightfully whimsical a tale as one could wish to read. Miss Taylor lives in London, Ontario.

It is a matter of satisfaction to us to know that both these writers will be appearing in *The Canadian* during the course of this year.

As a courteous retort to the folk who claim that Canada has little in the way of literature I would present the fact that this United States magazine contains five short stories; two by Canadians, two by Americans, and one by an Englishwoman, which seems to give Canada a fairly creditable place.

It is perhaps worth remarking too, that while we are spending time bewailing the sad influence of United States magazines on Canadian ways of thought, perhaps, Canadian thought is having as wide an influence across the line, through the medium of these powerful publications.



The Canadian Magazine

**Joseph Lister Rutledge
Editor.**

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Martin thought he loved her because she sang, then with the divine being folded close, his heart was somehow disappointed.

MARTIN WILLOWS came into the world on the wings of expiring song. The little thrush who bore him said it would be so and smiled upon him, the last of her six babies, before the cherished hope that had sustained her through the slow agony of labor faded and the cold hand of death closed down upon her gentle heart. She had known the child would sing; for night nor day the music in her soul had not abated. Night nor day in all those weary months of waiting the joy of it had never left her! Song was his native atmosphere. From the beginning, his little joys and happiness were phrased in bursts of harmony. Even in the cradle he crooned his contentment. And Margaret Willows, dour woman though she was, often paused in the care of her brother's household to regard the child with mingled admiration and doubt. Margaret did not approve of song; nor had she approved her brother's choice of wife. Not that Karen Willows in herself had displeased her. But a penniless youth with his fortune to make had no business to encumber himself with a frail piece of femininity. Lacking a sizable dowry, a vigorous body and a tireless mind should have been her portion, but Karen had possessed no such attributes. That she might have realized undreamed wealth by the magic of her golden voice Margaret never conceded. If she had, how would that have altered the case? Money was the prime requisite in the launching of talent; the wooing of success, and money was the one thing the Willows had always lacked.

But Karen Willows had known her hour of triumph. In far off Norway she had sung to the mighty Grieg and he had heard her, not with pity, but with pleasure. Yes, out of all that Academy in Christiania he had marked her for the Muse's own! Then, when fate and fortune seemed to smile upon her, came the smashing downfall of her father's business and the temporary eclipse of every hope. Lastly, as her timid feet were planted once again upon her chosen way, Edward Willows found her. She was singing in a third-rate music hall at the time and the bird-like freshness of her voice filled the stale auditorium with the lilt of springtime gladness. The rest was life. Loneliness and the fervor of young blood meeting settled the matter. For Karen, the path of true love ran too smoothly and the price she paid for domestic felicity with its thousand stings was complete oblivion. She was



Illustrated by
Lydia Fraser

The Third Concession

How Many Lives Must Pay to Make a Perfect Chance?

By
LAURA GOODMAN SALVERSON
Author of "The Viking Heart"
"Wayside Gleams," etc.

swallowed up in maternity as Edward was swallowed up in the boot and shoe business.

Yet even Margaret—who had come to help in her brother's domicile after the birth of the fourth Willows—would have admitted that seldom if ever had Karen referred to her lost opportunities. It is true she wept a little in her silent way when each new baby disappointed her; showed not the slightest inclination to follow her bent. Nonetheless they were all promising children and, thanks to Margaret, had pulled through the mumps and scarletina without serious complications. John and Edward, Jr., were by now junior clerks in their father's business; Madge and Clara both married, and Noel in High School.

MARGARET was proud of them in a second-hand way. They were not her own, but they would certainly have been worse without her able care. And then, when she was about to fold her

hands in well earned rest, came the ill-starred advent of Little Martin. Margaret was furious. Of all the idiotic, helpless things her sister-in-law had ever perpetrated this foisting of a baby upon a grown household was the worst! But Karen for once delighted in her maternity. This child of her autumn would make up for the rest. Good, stupid, fat little children banging their plates and bawling for porridge! She marvelled how she could have borne them! This child would be different. In her heart she knew it, as she knew a thousand incommunicable things. It would be a boy and he would sing! Being a man life would not rob him as it had robbed her. Life would not make him the bond-servant of soulless creatures. He would be free and the fire of genius leap high in his heart. Strong and free and fervent, the stupid ones of earth would hear and serve him! That would be her revenge on a world that had cheated her. This child should have the last ounce of her fading strength and all the secret passion stifled in her breast! All her life should flow into him and all the genius dormant there! Through him her art should find expression! Knowing that, the premonition of the end, which sometimes frightened her in her sleepless hours, lost its terror.

Now she was dead and her prophecies seemed destined to fulfilment. Martin Willows sang like a bird. He sang his way through the ups and downs of infancy, through grammar school and its tribulations, through the tedium of high school and the bother of growing up. What is more, he sang his way into the sanctum of the Episcopal Choir and thereby, into the heart of Aunt Margaret.

Margaret had stood his warbling with remarkable fortitude all through those intervening years though she had wished him silent on many an occasion. But, seeing him white-robed, his animated face uplifted, pouring out a flood of holy sound from the sacred precincts beyond the chancel in her house of worship, Margaret experienced a change of heart. Singing was a poor profession for any normal creature but some concession must be made to the glory of God. Martin sang better than any choir boy she had heard heretofore—the Canon confessed a like opinion after the service. Never should it be said that Margaret Willows deprecated the zeal of worshippers! If Martin sang to the glory of God and the joy of his servants, she would not block his progress.

So the stern old woman reversed her tactics. She no longer retired to the rear of the house when Martin practised in the parlor. Like a grim fate she sat beside him, checking as she thought, his victories and failures. When he trilled the scale too recklessly she frowned upon him, and when he sounded a note which, to her untutored ear seemed finer than the Master's, she tapped him affectionately on arm or shoulder. In fact, she began to take the same interest in this discipline of talent as she had in the nursing of refractory infants through the disagreeable stages of colic and croup. These uncomfortable things were evidently an integral part of existence. Besides, if the Choir Master could bear the tumult of training a dozen discordant voices—the saints only knew how long—to sing one perfect Gloria, she might well be expected to endure the tireless crescendos of the sweetest singer of them all.

She determined to do her duty. If upon occasion she resorted to a wad of cotton in a weary ear her courage was not shaken. Since Martin sang in the service of God he should sing befittingly. To that end she turned her tremendous energies; devising unheard of ways and means whereby the family budget retained a respectable balance, despite the growing expense of Martin's musical training. Just as effectively as she had clamped the chains on Martin's mother, she now plied herself to feather his wings. And, if in erratic moment of adolescence he sometimes hated the iron hand upon his destiny there, nonetheless, sprang up between them a singular attachment.

The years sped on. The older Willows settled down sensibly in homes of their own and The Willows Boot and Shoe Company was at least solvent; not so bad in a mid-west town, and a time of depression. At least "poor old Dad" always managed to support Martin in idleness! So said the elder Willows in gusts of filial exuberance. Poor old Dad! It was a shame! And then for the first time—or was it the second?—"poor old Dad" made a stir in the world. He got himself killed in his brand new motor car, while attempting to cross an intersection. It was certainly a spectacular finish to the life of a bald and greyish boot and shoe merchant.

Margaret held out stoutly for a thousand for Martin from the proceeds of a suit against the Railway Company. She got it; and when the estate was settled, a bare thousand more. With this and her own small annuity she decided the time was come to send Martin away.

In the city Martin experienced none of the calamitous episodes usually attributed to innocent genius turned loose in a wicked city. No one waylaid or attempted to lead him astray; nor were the doors of inaccessible impresarios scornfully closed against him. His landlord did not regard him with suspicion or thrust his board bill under the door on Saturday nights. On the contrary, he manifested a healthy interest in his new "paying guest" and having discovered he was from Canada, where some relative had made a sporadic attempt at farming in the 80's, he immediately introduced Martin to a resident singer who in turn contrived an audience with Gabriello. Gabriello was a genius in his way but humorously misnamed. Martin promptly called him "Grumpy".

Grumpy knew a voice in the making and shed tears of joy down Martin's cambric bosom at the conclusion of that first exceedingly successful interview. Needless to say Martin soared to the seventh heaven of glorified ambition. How he worked that summer! How vigorously he strove to emulate the habits of the great Aesthetics! No foolishness for him. Up with the dawn and to bed with the chickens; that was the ritual! Plain fare, constant practice and a daily trot through the park his sacred duty! He observed them all with Margaret-like rigor.

THEN came a day that Martin was never to forget. Grumpy obtained much favor and choice advertising through loaning his pupils, now and

again, for local concerts. He never discriminated, but insisted that the Press state explicitly that Gabriello artists always donated their services to worthy causes. However, being wise he never permitted the "causes" to exceed a certain quota which, nonetheless, detracted nothing from the praise he won for his beneficence. Now Martin was to sing the major role in the Spring Cantata of the First Congregational Church. The prestige of the church

foot ten of healthy manhood was a goodly creature, but because she knew he would foster her talent and pamper her vanities. Naturally she made no such confession at the time. Martin was her hero, her soulmate, her golden voiced Orpheus. With all her admiring heart she would stand behind him in his efforts; be the first to place the crown of victory upon his handsome head!

After all, Martin was young and sensitively imaginative. Without a secret hunger for adulation, emotional conquest, he would not have sung as he did. Zoa's pats and praises after the lonely years of Aunt Margaret's iron domination seemed sweet indeed. He told himself, by way of bracing himself for a confession to Grumpy and his Aunt, that he was the most fortunate being. Zoa was the only child of a moderately wealthy grain trader. Father's home would be their home; and Father was to find Martin a position, compatible with his musical ambitions. The more he rehearsed the story, the more proof it seemed against all and any criticism. Why, no unprejudiced mortal could introduce a single valid reason against such a fair and fortunate union.

GRUMPY thought otherwise. During Martin's embarrassed and halting explanation he puffed out his sallow cheeks till his waxed mustachios pointed at his pupil like murderous daggers. "Sancta Maria!" he shrilled not waiting for Martin to finish. "Sancta Maria! The son of my soul, the hope of my years to marry that vain doll! That puff puff! That sugar cat! That tin canary! Sancta Maria! Impossible, impossible! I won't bear it. Do you hear, I won't bear it! My Martin to throw his genius into the insatiable pot of matrimony!"

None else might so have spoken against his Zoa. But Martin did not include Grumpy in the cataloguing of ordinary mortals. He tried to laugh away the old man's temper but Grumpy would have none of his jesting. Up and down and round and about he whirled in his excitement. "Martin, you fool, you ass!".... Thump bump! Over went a piano stool. "Ass, ass, unspeakable ass!".... Whizz bang! went a rack of sheet music. "What's love to genius! I ask it seriously; what's even the greatest love? A little passing fever as soon forgot as done with!"

"But Signor!" Martin edged in nervously. "You rage as though this were the end and not the beginning of my career...."

Grumpy groaned, rolling his old eyes fearlessly. "Fool, fool, poor, blind, benighted fool!"

"Don't you see? Don't you understand?" Martin interposed heatedly, "that with Zoa beside me I can go on so much faster. Why, together we can scale undreamed of heights."

"Undreamed of—ah, that's good!" shrilled Grumpy. "Undreamed of—yes, 'undreamed of'.... the icy peaks of matrimony! Go then; leave me! I shall perish eventually of ingratitude. It is a Master's fated end. All the year I labor with you, filing off the crudities, coaxing out the beauty.... giving of my precious knowledge.... Then comes a silly vixen with a pretty face and over you go like any common ass! Away with you then to your Zoa. But don't ask me to teach you lullabies!"

That was that, thought Martin as the door slammed behind him. But he was deeply hurt, for all his exempting Grumpy from the courtesies of lesser mortals. Oh, well, he consoled himself, the old man would rue his ill temper; especially when he saw how unjust he had been. In the meantime Aunt Margaret remained to be dealt with.

Margaret—with the curse of commonsense strong in her blood—succumbed to Zoa's picture. Martin would need more money to pursue his studies—much more money. And her small income was hardly adequate. Could anything, then, have been more fortunate, more opportune, than this proposed marriage? Thank Heaven! thought she, Martin had not fallen in love with a penniless face!

So Martin married and settled down in a modest brick bungalow to a life of middle-class comfort.

C u r f e w

By
MURIEL KENNEDY

*While silence lies on the hushed lips of day,
Now, in the shadow-haunted eve, I steal
To my cool garden, where the nicotine
Breathes on the burdened air her sweet perfume;
Where the weird leaves, in converse murmuring
low,
Whisper close secrets to the listening wind;
Where on the grass beneath my feet, I feel
The teardrops night wept for departed day.*

*Now, like a black moth, softly dark descends,
The looming and inevitable dark,
And over every flower and leaf is cast
A magic veil of deftly-woven gloom:
Even the cruel hawk's relentless cry
As, whirring on his swift, unpitying wings,
He seeks his prey, seems futile and subdued
Beneath this calm and vast immensity.*

*The earth lies charmed beneath the spell of night
And, unresisting, yields her hoarded heat;
Sad little winds run sobbing here and there,
Seeking for comfort in the sheltering trees;
And clear, through all, and over all, I hear
A voice, primordial and renascent,—
Eternal Beauty throbbing through the gloom,
Bearing my soul upon a silent song.*

didn't count for much; the eulogies on Martin's voice by the Press certainly did. But far and above all else Zoa Collins mattered the most!

Martin first saw her in the dim seclusion of the choir loft powdering her little nose in the magnificent shadow of the great pipe organ. Even then, earnest young man though he was, his heart skipped a beat. Zoa powdered her nose as she did everything else, prettily, and for effect. It is true she was not aware of Martin's entrance, her charms just then being squandered upon the organist. It is equally true that having glimpsed the comeliness of Gabriello's pupil the organist lost all fascination and the complete battery of her pretty wiles was turned upon poor Martin. Of course, he lost his heart, and what is much worse, his head also.

It is useless to attempt any description of Zoa Collins. She was pretty, yes. But so were a dozen talented girls whom Martin had met week after week in the dusty sanctum of Grumpy's studio. She was pretty—with a vengeance! That was the curious way Martin thought of it in the years that followed.

Behind the sweetness of her smile was a queer cat-like quality that very effectively warned the adventurous against rubbing the lady the wrong way. And, cat-like, she had the supreme talent of knowing how to curl up lazily in the lap of life, and by the mere grace of being to arouse pleasure in others. Martin thought he loved her because she sang. So, at least, he persuaded himself after his proposal, when, with the divine being folded close, his heart was somehow disappointed.

Zoa was never in any doubt as to the why and wherefore of her actions. Like her feline sisters she knew exactly what she wanted. She wanted to marry Martin; not because he sang or, in his five-

Everything moved on like clockwork. Zoa did her daily dozen at a certain hour, took a cold dip, dressed, gave her curls thirty strokes with an approved brush. She nibbled a rusk and drank buttermilk for breakfast; telephoned her various friends and acquaintances; verified her engagements and made new ones. Then she sang—all this with Martin very much in attendance.

Martin was in love. It took at least three months for the drug to wear off. Then, one morning for no accountable reason he felt very foolish sitting in his silk pajamas watching Zoa stretch and squirm through her daily exercise....why the deuce had he ever let himself in for such a silly show! Frowning he got up and made for the bathroom.

"Martin!" Zoa sat bolt upright on the patterned rubber mat Father Henry had given her last Christmas. "Martin!!" A world of amazement and accusation lay in the word.

Martin slumped against the door. She was such a pretty kitten! So soft and white and golden! What a brute he was to bring even the tiniest cloud into those lovely blue eyes of hers! "Er...ah...you see—I really need a shave," faltered Martin.

"Oh, course you do silly! First, however, sit right down and watch me do my chest developer." Martin sat down. But at breakfast the devil of discontent again prodded him.

"I'll just have to settle down to serious work, Zoa. This flitting round to teas and parties is no game for a man."

"Oh, but you're a singer!" chimed Zoa and blew a kiss at him across the table. "You're a singer, silly boy, so why the fuss?"

"Damn it, I ought to be!" He snapped. "What I am is a sort of cheap puppet show. Pull the string and I dance to the fiddle! I'm telling you Zoa, I've had enough of it. I'm going to work; to make ready for Grumpy's last gruelling."

Zoa watched Martin during this first performance of husbandly misconduct with darkening eyes. Then she laughed—oh, very softly, the full red lips just barely lifting from her perfect teeth.

"How ridiculous! Trying to pick a quarrel over nothing! Well, I for one won't do it. I hate scenes and I certainly have no intention of ruining my complexion just because I'm married!"

"But Zoa—please!"

"No, I won't argue. Eat your grape fruit. See, naughty boy, you've let your coffee get cold."

Serene once more, Zoa rang for the maid and demanded fresh coffee. The recollection of Grumpy's "icy peaks of matrimony" flashed into Martin's mind as he met his pretty wife's glistening smile. "Oh, lord!" he groaned and bolted the hateful fluid. Zoa laughed again; slipped to his side; rumpled his hair; kissed his ears, and pulled him to the piano. "Come," she cooed, "hear me in the Mad Song from Lucia. Maurice Stone said he thought I did it better than Patti." For the first time Martin really listened to Zoa critically, disinterestedly—amazingly. What he thought to himself does not bear repeating. What he said was: "Maurice is an unspeakable ass!"

Zoa walked out of the room and slammed the door behind her.

THE months sped on. Little by little the sickened soul of Martin real-

ized its ugliest fears. Zoa had acquired him, as she had acquired a poodle and a cat—for her private property; her specific amusement. It had pleased her to think of herself singing in company with a presentable husband.

Day by day Martin's suspicion of Zoa's utter selfishness grew upon him; evade it though he would the proofs were fast forthcoming. Serious study and practice were out of the question. Zoa must have him here and Zoa must have him there. It was impossible to deny this society; unthinkable to slight that one. Zoa made engagements for him—worse still, when finally, his popularity began to worry her, she assumed the right to choose his songs! That was the final offence; the blow that shattered the last of his illusions. Zoa was getting afraid....Zoa was getting jealous!

It was at the close of a garden party given in their own home, when every song that Zoa persuaded him to sing was deliberately ill-chosen that Martin rebelled for the second time. No mild rebellion either but a vehement fury, the maddened cry of humiliated and long tortured genius. Yet, what he actually said is extraneous to the story—for it was said too late. What Zoa replied is the sum and substance of it.

"Martin, I won't even listen to your raging. It's too utterly ridiculous and absurd! Besides I have enough to bear as it is. I'm expecting my baby in the spring."

ONCE again Aunt Margaret came to assume another's maternal duties. Zoa could not be expected to care for her child. Poor Zoa! sighed her friends; so sweet and patient; so uncomplaining all the while! Never a word about a winter's lost gaieties or the cruel discomforts of impending maternity. And what a sweet mother she made! How adorable she was with the babe cuddled to her pretty bosom. Dear Zoa, how lovely she looked convalescing!

She certainly did, and to the tune of a good many dollars. But what cared Father Henry for that? He was getting a bit fagged, it is true, but again, Martin was rapidly shaping into a valuable assistant. Since the day he had learned of his prospective grandchild, and as a matter of course had drawn Martin's attention to the greater responsibilities of fatherhood, he had found no fault in his son-in-law. Of course he had always liked him; had rejoiced that someone was about to humor his

little Zoa. But with the prospects of a family, life assumed a more serious aspect. He was getting old—a grandchild proclaimed it—and Martin must be pruned and primed to take his place. If he proved adaptable Father Henry proposed to do well by him.

NEEDLESS to say with Zoa's health so precarious Martin had no choice of alternatives. By the time his daughter had made a safe entrance into the world his metamorphosis was complete. He was a zealous broker and the pride of Father Henry! What he suffered in his heart is hard to estimate; what he hoped—if hope he did—he revealed to no one. Happy he seemed; prosperous he certainly was; to the superficial his position appeared enviable. But Margaret was not hoodwinked nor long in ferreting out the trouble. She challenged him one night in the brand new nursery when he came to speculate upon the possible charms of the squirming red thing they called his daughter.

"Martin, lad," began the old lady, "you're not singing much these days. Not singing as you used to....Gabriello wrote to me just before I left home. He's wondering when you'll be coming back to him—he mentioned New York...."

Martin paled, and with bitterness she had never heard from him before, hurled at her in his disgust. "Never speak the name again in my hearing! Gabriello! What good to throw genius into the insatiable mess pot of matrimony?"

Margaret got up hastily, locked the nursery door and, facing her nephew resolutely, unb burdened her conscientious mind.

"Martin Willows! You're acting like you did at twelve when the choir master wouldn't let you sing the hardest chorals! Things don't always go the way we figure but that's no reason for laying down the spade. I was never one to favor singing as a profession. Seems to me a voice is given for one's pleasure not for profit. But I've done a lot of thinking since I've been alone....since I've begun to feel the years. Mostly I keep thinking of your mother, Martin. Poor little thrush! It's plain she never really lived in the world we built round her. She was like a dreamer moving amongst us; confused-like and helpless in the face of work-a-day things. She left us with a smile—Poor, poor Karen! How little we knew her! And she died happy thinking she had passed on to you the sum of her life, her heart's desire. It's like this, Martin, I figure there's a queer covenant between that little dead mother and you....You've got to see it through!"

MARTIN forgot his years, his dignity, his new parenthood. Like a heart-sick little boy he bowed his tumbled head on old Margaret's frigid knees. "Don't think I'm not trying," he groaned. "But something I can't explain keeps creeping upon me like a slow terror. I'm working to get a season's liberty...I'm making money Aunt Margaret, good money—everything should be all right—And still I'm afraid!"

"Tut, tut! lad. Of course, it'll be all right. You're getting all upset over nothing. See Martin, what a fine little daughter you've got? Bright as a gosling and with brown eyes like your own."

Martin did not accept defeat without a struggle. But Zoa

(Turn to page 43)



"Poor old Dad—what a life they've led you—they, I, all of us,"

The Third Concession

(Continued from page 9)

was like the "principalities and powers" spoken of in Scripture—a protagonist too great for the unwary. Her spells and tyrannies were insidious and indefinable; when she seemed most guileless her cunning was at work. She prided herself on diplomacy. In time Martin became "my temperamental husband" to all her intimates. Martin was so talented, and business so exacting! Some few were wicked enough to believe that Martin's pretty wife was herself a man-size problem—a bit exacting.

However, as has been said, Martin did not give up without a struggle. When little Bernice was three Aunt Margaret died leaving him her modest estate. It was on the way to the station, after settling her humble affairs, that he made his drastic decision. He'd had enough of matrimony and the prison walls of home. He would not return to Zoa with her refined torments! He was done with her and the empty vanities she worshipped. He would be true to his trust—carry on the torch lighted by the Little Thrush—Grumpy should keep him to it!

Grumpy would have welcomed Martin back from a dozen wives; kept him from them with fierce unfeigned delight. But the great teacher crumpled down in a dejected heap after the first testing of the once golden voice. "Mother of Pity! Blessed Mother of God!" he moaned in helpless despair. "Mother of Sorrows...." No raging now. No temperamental storm. Just the inexplicable grief of an artist over the death of art. "Martin....Martin.... my Martin—" he muttered brokenly, over and over again. "Oh, Martin—my son...."

And Martin, with death in his heart, passed out of the studio forever.

Martin had learned at bitter cost, the ancient truism that a man's love must be single. The voice that had bawled out thousands for Zoa would never again be lifted in conquering song!

Zoa did not complain. That Martin should all at once turn his whole attention to making money was commendable and fortunate. It was as it should be. Father Henry's health had been failing of late and she intended to take him away for the winter. Bernice would stay at home of course (her nurse was very capable) for Zoa herself needed a change. Children were such a drag. Moreover, she meant to have a season in New York under Herr Froebel. All of which took money—much money. How extremely fortunate, therefore, that Martin had turned out a business genius.

Martin did not call it genius. He called it graft. Whereat the amused Zoa rumpled his hair; pecked at his forehead with sticky lips and scolded him prettily for his silly tantrum. Poor Martin! She forgave him so freely these days—freely as she spent his money.

Each day seemed like the other; each month; each year. Yet inscrutable Destiny had never wavered in her plan; silent and resolute she played her little game, moving her pawns with irresistible purpose. Father Henry passed out of the story, considerately; scarcely upsetting his daughter's social season. Martin's hair began to grow thin; to turn a little grey at the temples. Even Zoa, despite her rigorous diet and careful exercise was a little less slim. But of course, singers always tended to avoid dupois, so she de-

fended the sweet surplus—and a successful artist had a right to let down a little after a strenuous career.

At last came the day when Martin realized that his daughter was grown up; grown up and very pretty! To tell the truth he had never taken much notice of her. A wilful whirlwind, she had raged throughout her own domain, chastened occasionally by an exasperated mother or bribed into docility by an indolent nurse. In either case she had touched him but little. He had eaten her birthday cakes absently and paid for her Christmas presents in the same spirit. In other words, he had accepted her as part and parcel of Zoa's household. But now all this was suddenly changed—incredibly changed. Bernice was not only pretty—on a larger scale than Zoa—but she sang well. Roared, is what Zoa called it.

Knowing his wife's fondness for playing up her possessions, it surprised Martin considerably to learn that Zoa had never taken the least interest in her daughter's voice. He said as much to Bernice on a night shortly after he discovered her. It happened innocently. He had sauntered into Zoa's sacred music room there to surprise the young hoyden, thundering out a passionate score on the dignified grand piano. Her voice was certainly not pretty but there was something deep and powerful and fundamental about it and Martin knew it was real.

"Hello Kid," said Martin, not knowing just how to address a stranger-daughter.

"Lo Dad," responded Bernice cool and unaffected.

"Funny," went on Martin, "how you seem to have jumped into ladyhood all of a sudden."

"Been seventeen years jumping," retorted Bernice sharply.

"Well, well! Seventeen is it?" smiled Martin, interested despite himself in this cryptic, dark-eyed, little-known daughter. "And so you sing—" he went on, scanning the music before her, "good stuff too....Funny, you know, that your mother shouldn't have trained you a little."

"Lucky, I'd say," came the unabashed and disrespectful answer.

"But you'd like it, I suppose?" he queried, by way of sounding her purpose—"to be trained, I mean?"

"Going to," corrected Bernice.

"To what?" pursued Martin, not accustomed as yet to this gatling gun conversation.

"To study," snapped Bernice, "study, train, sing—never fear I'll find what I need!"

She did; striking her colors by selecting a teacher in the face of maternal displeasure. In the face of that same displeasure she joined the Home Theatre and in no time at all became a favorite in the cast. So it seemed to the irate and humiliated Zoa, who, for reasons of her own, had adopted a superior and condescending attitude toward the amateur organization. But, used as Martin was to his wife's prejudice and selfishness, it shocked him nonetheless to discover that it was sheer unadulterated jealousy which induced Zoa's antagonism.

"Poor old Mummy!" the irrepressible genius bawled derisively. "Poor old Mummy! Jealous of her little pet: jealous and regretting her lost youth!"

In time the humor of it dawned on Martin; to the greater peace of his soul and his everlasting amuse-

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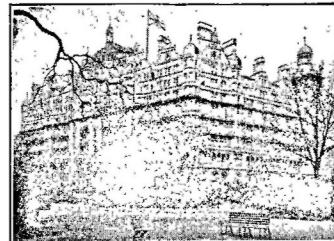
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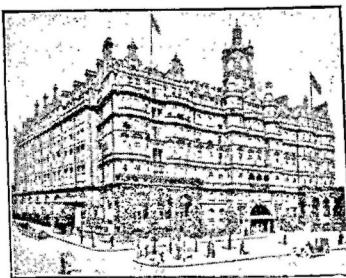
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ment. Novel it certainly was to sit by and watch the storm, uncontemned and unaffected. Restful too, after the trying years to escape the broadsides of Zoa's tempests. Their tireless battle fascinated him, kept him in a constant and lively expectation. Of the end he cared not to think since it would terminate a happy pastime and a most ungallant dream. The truth of the matter was that Martin derived an unholy pleasure from the knowledge that Zoa had met her equal in selfishness. Worse, it renewed his youth to observe the unflaging impertinence of his only child. He revelled in her defiance and staked more of hope than he knew on that hard-headed little mercenary. Not that he entertained any illusions about Bernice. He understood the mainspring of her forcefulness too well. Roughshod she would plough her way to the desired goal; with tooth and claw tear through to triumph. A single passion, an unswerving self interest—that was the secret of success....At last Martin understood what Gabriello meant by saying that love had no part to play in genius.

So he waited the inevitable; unimpassioned and well content. It came sooner than he expected. Bernice had ripped through her elementary training as she ripped through everything else—strong, confident, tireless. And one fine evening she exploded her little bomb at the dinner table.

"I've been offered a small part in a musical farce," said she, "Harriet Eastman and I. Harriet's brother is stage director or something. His wife's a nurse. We'll live with them."

"Bernice Willows!" gasped her mother. "What utter nonsense! Who on earth are the Eastman's? You, a Willows, to disgrace yourself in musical comedy! Don't let me hear another word about it!"

"Going next week," returned Bernice, cool and unruffled. "Dad please pass the olives."

"Martin, have you nothing to say to this nonsense?" asked Zoa, with a rising inflection of voice, ominous in other days.

Martin shrugged and passed the olives. Zoa flung down her napkin; glared at her daughter; glared at her husband; glared at the maid till she left the room, and white with rage glared again at the unperturbed Bernice.

"You little fool!" she stormed, "what do you know about the rigors and expense of musical training? Who's to keep you in the luxury you're accustomed to? Do you never think? Never consider anyone but yourself? Martin, don't sit there and say nothing, sneak for yourself—she has no consideration for me. Selfish girl, think what such a request means—the expense, the money! Why, you're poor dear father hasn't had a vacation in years...In years—and you propose a career! It's preposterous! Martin, tell her it's preposterous—why do you sit there silent? You know it's preposterous; why, business has been so—"

"Cut the capers: save the steam!" interrupted the irrepressible Bernice. "I'm not planning to deprive you of your pocket money. I'm going on my own. I'll earn something from the start. Besides, don't forget grandfather left a little nest egg to be mine at twenty-one!"

Zoa beat her ringed hands on the snowy table and shrieked with anger.

"Bernice Willows! How dare you! How dare you talk to me like that! Martin, are you going to permit it? Must I be insulted by my

own child and before her father! Oh, oh, oh, what a life I've led since Father Henry left us..."

Tears choked her; mean hot little tears that ploughed ugly furrows in the precious make-up of her face. The weakness passed. With a final sob, violent, explosive she flashed out again: "Little fool, where do you expect to land with that voice? On Broadway, I suppose—on Broadway with the range of a crow! Oh, oh, it would be funny if it weren't so tragic. On Broadway!! Silly little fool, the best you'll ever do is the front row of a cheap chorus."

Quick as rifle fire Bernice came back at her: "What of it? Is the front row of a musical comedy so much worse than the front row of a church choir?"

Harmless enough words but so impregnated with scorn that even Martin winced—the kid was a bit raw he admitted. Zoa paled, clutched her chair in helpless fury; her rebuke came broken, strained and unnatural—"You insult me—your mother...to my face. Martin, why don't you say something?"

With a wicked laugh, and an impish shrug at Martin, Bernice whirled from the room, destruction and distress behind her and the wave of her laughter like a sting upon a wound....A sting that brought a queer gleam to the veiled eyes of her father!

Much later that night, when Zoa had been put to bed with cologne at her throbbing temples and a hot water bottle at her feet, Martin stole up the hall to his daughter's door and knocked timidly.

"Walk in," came the brisk command. Everything about Bernice was brisk and to the point. Feeling just a little foolish he entered this sanctum never visited before—a room as practical as its occupant, minus all those dainty fripperies so dear to feminine fancy. Yet Bernice was not insensible to beauty, she had evidently been watching the moonlit lake from the little span of her window. Cool, cryptic, level-eyed she faced him—she looked at him with a sharp question in her glance.

Martin was at a loss to begin. The self sufficiency of her, the indomitable purpose so clearly defined in her hard young face, made him feel like a foolish intruder. Not unnaturally she misconstrued his hesitation.

"It's no use, Dad," she smiled, a hint of weariness in her voice. "Don't try to persuade me. I'll not be tricked and used and put upon like you." She flashed into fire, facing him with her great eyes black with intensity. "I'll not be beaten—I'll not be cheated—not by anyone! And if it's not too difficult, just tell that self-sacrificing mother of mine the truth. For once in her life introduce her to the genuine article!" A whimsical smile flashed over the hardness of her face. "Poor old Dad—what a life they've led you—they, I, all of us. Scold me if you must, but don't expect to change my mind."

"Nothing is further from my mind," said Martin, quickly, passionately.

"What? You'll not—?"
"No!" cried Martin. "No! by my life I'll not!" He glanced at her with a crooked smile. "Ridiculous Kid, I love you for it! A good fight, Bernice—but don't forget your freedom was bought and paid for!"

For one suspicious moment brown eyes measured brown eyes. Then she flew to his side. "Good old Dad," she breathed, "of course you paid the price! But Grandma made the first concession!"



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Bully Luck

(Continued from page 21)

"Can't make out a thing—can you? Looks like we're lost."

"I'll say we are," said the third man.

"Not a thing to go by," growled Flynn. "Not a damn flare, now, when we could use it. You birds got any idea how our line runs? I ain't."

No answer. Graveyard quiet, save for the spit-spit-spit of the spring rain.

Flynn made a few funny noises with his nose, then muttered, "Bokoo' heinies 'round here. Can smell 'em. Every time. Never wrong. If we go wallowin' 'round together the way we've been doin' none of us'll see daylight. One of us, at least, has got to get in—to put them red 'n' gold lounge lizards on Brigade right, if for nothin' else. Nine hundred yards? Hell! Some bright guess, I'll tell the cock-eyed world."

"Every man for himself—you mean, sergeant?" mumbled Freddie Fulton.

"That's what I mean," grunted Flynn. With a little wriggle he hitched up his belt, adding: "I'll start it." And off he snaked into the night.

The third man promptly followed Flynn's lead.

Freddie Fulton was alone. And with none to depend upon but himself. The realization was stabbing. He hunched in the bottom of an old shell-hole trying to halt the round-about his senses had become. He was soaked to the skin. The front of his tunic and breeks was a lather of mud and chalk. His hair was matted with dirt and sweat. He had torn the back of one hand in forcing his way through some wire and it was throbbing painfully.

After a while he crawled over the lip of the hole. He butted blindly into the gloom. He sacrificed caution for speed—a dangerous move under the circumstances as he was to realize almost instantly. Directly in front of him—how close he'd never know—flashed a machine gun. The burst missed him by a miracle. The nickel sang like bees. Two or three bullets ricochetted off strands of wire and went humming into space.

Freddie flopped the other way. A second gun came to life with a slow but deadly "pup-pup-pup-pup."

"Oh God," breathed Freddie—and stronger men in like circumstances probably would have breathed the same thing—"show me a way out, will you?"

On hands and knees, he groped, befuddledly. He veered off to the right. But he hadn't covered any ground to speak of before a third gun—square across his path, at that—spilled its clatter on the night and brought Freddie's pounding heart up into his throat.

Little by little quiet was restored. The guns quit clacking. Only the unceasing whisper of the rain.

Freddie removed his face from the muck where his last plunge had partly buried it. Momentarily, he dabbed at eyes and nose and mouth—rid himself of his smothering feeling. Then he twisted himself into a ball and began to roll. Inch by inch, he rolled. How long—how far he'd rolled he could not say. He was completely fagged—done in. Still, he told himself, it was better to play safe. He could manage, he guessed, a few more yards of the torture.

"Swosh! Swosh!"

And the final "swosh!" of his

body flopped him over the brink of a sap—on top of four as startled heinies as ever wore the uniform of their Fatherland.

The afternoon had been one of scudding clouds and sunless sky. Back of the ridge, in the reserve line, safe from the prying eyes of British batteries, Frech Kassler, Jager infantryman, had spent the better part of an hour rummaging through a sacked supply dump. Most everything of value about the once-British depot long since had been carried away. Kassler had kicked his way disgustedly through the debris, and had been about to relinquish his hunt, when his beady eyes fixed on an unopened packing case three-parts buried in the spill.

It was the work of an instant to seize a stake, lying nearby, and with stout strokes to batter away one end of the case. Out before the Jager's eyes tumbled a score or more of bully-beef cans.

Now Kassler was blessed or cursed as the case may be with an abnormal appetite. He always was hungry. Consequently, his eyes fairly sparkled as they took in his "find." Once, on the Lens front, he'd sampled the tinned meat issued to "Tommy"; had conceded, at the time, its superiority to the blacker brand put up in his own distant Munstereifel.

"Good," chuckled he, tucking several of the weather-worn tins into his haversack, and speeding off as the irate call of an observant "unteroffizier" burned across his ears.

Regularity in meals was rarely known to the man of the trenches, and, in this respect, the German differed little from his foes. The troops ate when they felt most like it. And so it was with Kassler, who, the night of his foraging jaunt, at the termination of the boche relief, found himself planted with three companions in a corner of a remote sap somewhere in proximity, he'd been informed, to the foe's front line.

Instructions called for a close watch. But at the moment Kassler, whose prescribed duty was the operation of the light machine gun at his elbow, gleefully informed his companions he had a little treat for them. Whereupon he groped amongst the equipment of the sappo bottom and finally produced an object which in the gloom of the place appeared little more than a blur.

"Beef," he explained. "Tommy's. I found it today. And there is more for tomorrow, too."

"Good work, Frech," chorused his companions, not averse to sharing the small block of meat which Kassler had stripped of its tin covering and was quartering with the blade of his tasseled trench-dagger.

Of a sudden, one of the quartette stiffened, ears cocked. "Hsst," said he. "Movement."

"Foolish fellow," chided Kassler. "Movement? A rabbit, perhaps?" "But that firing, a while back," persisted the alarmed one. "Our machine guns do not fire at rabbits."

"No," scoffed Kassler, "they do not. But we hold the line thinly, here—something we do not wish 'Tommy' to know. And so we must fire wildly now and then for make-believe."

Bowing his head in a mock offering of thanks, he crammed a goodly portion of the beef into his



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