

# "BROKEN"

By RUBY M. AYRES

## SIXTEENTH INSTALMENT

"When I get well I'll start all over again and show you how nice I can be," she told him. "You've been so good to me—far better than I ever deserved. I'll pay you back some day, Giles."

"Get well and strong and I shall want nothing else," he told her.

The reports of the specialists were encouraging. They had every hope, they said—it might be a long time naturally, but Mrs. Chittenham was such an excellent patient.

Giles winced and turned away.

One Saturday he and Bim went down in Gloucester to follow up a case which they hoped might lead to Julie. Chittenham had told Sadie he was coming away on business.

She turned impatiently away when he would have kissed her.

"You treat me like a child. Nobody would think I am your wife."

"Chittenham frowned.

"Don't be unreasonable, Sadie. I cannot spend all my time with you."

Her drawn face flushed.

"You would want to, if you loved me," she accused him.

"If you would rather I did not go—," he began hopelessly, but she broke in offensively:

"Oh, go! go! They all say you behave like an angel. They all think that I am a beast to you. Oh, I know they don't say so, but I know what they think." Then as she felt him move to leave she caught at his arm with her thin, nervous hands.

"I'm sorry, Giles. I didn't mean it. I do try to be reasonable, but if you were in my place—," Her voice broke and she controlled it with an effort.

"I'll do anything in the world to make you happy, Sadie," Giles said, but in his heart he despised himself for a coward and a traitor to the woman he loved. He could do nothing for Sadie if it was only his love she wanted; that was already in the keeping of Julie, who had gone out of his life perhaps forever. He kissed Sadie hurriedly, anxious to be gone, but she clung to him.

"Kiss my lips—kiss my lips—," "Sadie."

He held back from her for a moment, then gave way. He kissed her lips kindly enough, but with no passion or warmth, and she pushed him from her petulantly.

"Go away. You don't love me. You hate living with me."

And a storm of tears came, and bitter sobbing.

Chittenham went out to Bim, who was waiting for him, his face set and white, and his eyes miserable.

"I can't stand this much longer," he told her as they drove away. "It's an impossible situation. God only knows what the end will be." But the whole world knew the end when, on Monday morning, after a hopeless search along a chain of false clues which led them nowhere, Bim and Chittenham returned to town.

There was an urgent telephone call from Sadie's nursing home. Would Mr. Chittenham please come immediately.

"I'll go with you," Bim said at once and looking at Chittenham's white face, she hated herself for saying, "Perhaps it's good news. Perhaps she is recovering her sight."

"I hope so," God knows. I hope so," Chittenham answered.

But it was something very different. Early that morning, just as it was getting light, they had found Sadie lying on the pavement below her window—quite dead.

"It must have been an accident—," they told Bim for his comfort. "She must have tried to open the window—the nurse had left her alone for a few minutes—and we think she lost her balance. Last night she was quite cheerful and hopeful, and looking forward to seeing you today. We are sure it must have been an accident."

Chittenham made no answer, and presently Bim drew the nurse aside to whisper, "Would she . . . do you think she would ever have recovered her sight?"

There was a little silence before the answer came.

The doctors were hopeful—but . . . the nurse shook her head. "I don't think Mrs. Chittenham herself ever had any real hope."

Bim walked to the window and looked out. The sun was shining and

the air was soft and warm. She closed her own eyes and tried to imagine what Sadie had suffered. To be blind! Never to see the sunlight or the flowers, or a beloved face.

She turned and crossed the room to Chittenham. She understood so well what he was feeling, how his heart must be torn with remorse and grief, and yet through it all she knew he must be conscious of a great and overwhelming relief.

She slipped a hand into his.

"At any rate, wherever she is, she can see the sunshine again."

There had been no definite plan in Julie's mind when she ran away from London.

She had no idea where she meant to go, but she had taken a ticket to Folkestone because it was the first place that occurred to her, and because she had once spent a happy holiday there.

It was only at mid-day when she reached Folkestone that the idea occurred to her to cross over to France. It was only a little journey, but there was something comforting in the knowledge that she could so easily put the width of the sea between herself and the things from which she desired to escape.

She crossed to Ostend by the mid-day boat and took a room in a cheap little pension which at any rate had the merit of great cleanliness. And there Julie stayed for a fortnight, sleeping and resting, and trying to forget.

She never thought of Schofield—it was too bitter a memory. He had been the rock in her sea of distress to which she had always unconsciously clung, and he had failed her even as everything else had failed her.

And then one evening as she was walking along by the sea with the sunset light in her face, she met him. He looked ill, she thought, and old! And as her eyes searched his face, it seemed impossible that only a few days ago she had seen him and talked to him—surely moments must have dragged away since she told him he must go out of her life.

And Schofield gripped her wrist with fingers that bruised, as he said hoarsely—"Thank God, I've found you."

Julie managed to laugh.

"Do you know that you actually sound sincere?" she taunted him.

"I was never more sincere in my life. Where can we go to be alone? I have so much to say to you."

Julie glanced down the almost deserted sea-front.

"If you have anything to say that must be said, I hardly think any one will overhear you. But I am in a hurry."

Her voice broke angrily. "Why are you here at all?"

"We have been hunting for you ever since you left London." His agitation was unmistakable; she could feel how his hand shook as he held her wrist.

Julie laughed again.

"What?" she queried.

"Yes—Giles Chittenham and myself."

"Giles Chittenham?" The color died from her face. "I am, indeed, honored," she said with a bitter sneer.

Schofield winced as if she had hurt him.

"Don't talk like that. If you only knew . . . Oh, Julie, let me explain—let me try to explain—"

"There is nothing to explain—nothing I want to hear."

"You don't mean that—it's not like you to be hard and cruel—"

She tried to free herself.

"Let me go. You and I have finished with each other."

"Yes!" He released her wrist, but now she made no effort to leave him; there was a haunting sadness in his eyes that held her against her will.

"But there is still Chittenham," he said very quietly.

Julie tried to speak but no words would come, and before she could resist he had drawn her down to sit beside him on one of the seats overlooking the sea, and was holding her hand in both his.

"We've been searching for you day and night, Julie—it seems a lifetime since you went away—"

Her lip curled scornfully.

"A lifetime! only two weeks—"

"Sometimes two days can be an eternity," he told her with unusual

eloquence. He did not heed when she tried to interrupt him; he went on rapidly.

"So much seems to have happened since . . . since you and I parted. You know—" he stopped abruptly only to go on again with quiet deliberation. "Chittenham's wife is dead—Chittenham is free."

Julie tried to speak, but her lips felt too cold to frame any words. She sat staring before her at the fading sunset with a sense of numb reality.

Chittenham's wife was dead! Sadie dead! Sadie! . . . Sadie to have died like the butterfly she had been, after a few short hours of vain fluttering in the sunshine.

Like a voice in a dream she heard Schofield speaking again.

"We've searched for you everywhere—Miss Lennox—"

"Oh—Bim!"

Bim had never failed her—the only friend who had not.

He went on without noticing the interruption. "We've searched everywhere—Miss Lennox and Chittenham and I. It is pure chance that I came here today, something seemed to force me to come . . ."

"Poor Lawrence!" Julie whispered.

He winced and turned his face away.

"I've been a fool—all my own fault . . . and yet you never cared for me, Julie. . . . I always know that you never cared."

"I don't care for any one," she said harshly. "I will never care for any one again. It hurts too much—it's not worth the little happiness one gets from them in return."

They were both silent for a moment, then she broke out feverishly.

"Why did you send my letter back to me? Why were you so cruel?"

He told her unabatingly: "A man named Lombard . . . a man named Lombard came to me with a story about you and . . . Giles Chittenham. He said that you and he spent the night together on the St. Bernard . . ." He turned his sad eyes to her. "Forgive me, Julie, I must have been mad to have believed it."

"Forgive me? I don't understand what you mean."

Then suddenly she knew, and the blood rushed in a burning tide to her face.

"You thought that?" she whispered.

"Yes."

The last streak of sunset warmth had faded, and there was a chill wind blowing in from the sea. Julie shivered and rose to her feet.

"It's cold, I must go."

"Let me come with you, Julie. Now I've found you—don't send me away like this—without saying you forgive me."

"It cannot matter to you whether I forgive you or not."

"It matters everything in the world, Julie, if there is anything I can do for you—anything, anything—to make amends for the past."

Julie half smiled as she looked at him. It mattered so little to her that he had been unjust, he had never had any real power to hurt her; forgiveness between them would be an easy thing.

She touched his hand with sudden kindness.

"Don't let us say any more about it, Lawrence. It's over and done with. We'll part friends, shall we?"

"And you will come back with me to England?" he asked eagerly.

Her face grew cold.

"Come back to England . . . I never want to go back again."

"But, Julie—your happiness . . ." She laughed mirthlessly.

CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK

## The More of the Old Customs the Merrier

The wise mother will try to plan just enough events for the week following Christmas to keep up the holiday spirit without creating weariness. There may be skating, sledding and "rention" parties, according to needs. Festivities will certainly include a watchnight party and the passing of sweets on New Year's morning. For this, according to tradition, will sweep on all dispositions against the difficulties of the year ahead. The more of the old customs the merrier, for they all have a part in "keeping Christmas" in the fullest sense of the word. Successful Farming.

In Great Britain are 295 privately owned airplanes.

## AGENTS CONFERENCE WAS SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

The economics of farming and the outlook for the year 1931 was the theme of all discussions, studies and speeches before the annual agricultural extension conference held at State College last week.

Particular emphasis was placed on the need to reduce the acreage of cotton and tobacco. The agents not only heard of the world economic situation from one of the nation's leading experts, Dr. L. H. Bean of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Washington; but, they also heard of the need of readjustment from North Carolina's agricultural governor, O. Max Gardner, and from representatives of the Federal Farm Board and State College experts.

A new idea in the live-at-home program was voiced by President E. C. Brooks when he said the cost of maintaining the huge army of persons who live by exchanging or dealing in farm commodities had grown

so great that for them to live meant for agriculture to die. He therefore urged the agents to help their farmers in growing less of the things which must be sold or exchanged for cash and to reduce the cost of this exchange by co-operation in buying and selling. He urged a further development of curb and local markets.

W. F. Schilling, dairy representative of the Federal Farm Board, made one of the great speeches of the conference, in the opinion of the agents. He told a graphic story of the dairy development in Southern Minnesota and gave facts about the 642 co-operative creameries of that section to show how the owners and producers make money and save money through growing and milking cows. A. F. Lever, former congressman from South Carolina, and author of the Smith-Lever Extension Act, was another outstanding speaker who urged a reduction in cotton acreage next season.

# LETTER FROM FATHER TO HIS SON

DEAR SON FREDERICK:

Today is your first birthday, the first anniversary of the day your mother brought you into this world. You are one year old and I am thirty-two. My birthday present to you is to be the establishment of a financial plan for you which I hope will culminate successfully. I am today putting \$20.00 in the Watauga Building and Loan Association and expect, God willing, to continue the same payment, a \$20.00 monthly, until such time as you yourself will be able to assume the amount. I want you to assume as much of the \$20 as you are able just as soon as you start earning your own money. I will continue to make up the difference at that time until you are in a position to maintain the full \$20.00 monthly.

According to the table, an \$18.47 monthly payment, compounded semi-annually at 6 per cent, totals \$50,000.00 in forty-five years. I, therefore, want you to keep this up until you are 45 years old, or thirteen years older than I am now. As the building and loan matures, reinvest it with the interest, being careful that safety rather than an attractively large interest is your guiding factor. Four per cent government or municipal bonds or 5 per cent first farm mortgages, if 6 per cent, safe building and loan companies are not available, are better than stocks or bonds in companies, which may seem perfectly sea-going, and yet your control is too remote. To allow for a possible decrease in interest rate is one of the reasons why I am making the payment \$20.00 in place of \$18.47, although, of course, also the \$20.00 even figure is easier on the book-keeper and just as easy to raise. I also believe it would be advisable not to take the money at any time for use in your own business or business schemes. They might go awry. It may seem foolish at

times if you are borrowing money at a larger rate of interest than this fund brings you, but it may pay in the end.

I am starting you out on this plan for two reasons—first, so that you will acquire as young as possible the habit of thrift, and second, to give you an absolute sure way of having \$50,000.44 at the approximate age of 45 (providing you do not default from the plan). You will doubtless have other business ventures and expenses, but if you will just stick to this one above all else, your \$50,000 will be assured. I hope no evil effects will result from this plan. For instance, that you go to the extreme of thrift which ends in parsimony, although, unless I miss my guess, your blood will not permit such living. If, however, the amount of principal you possess exceeds that of other boys your age, I do not want you to permit it to affect the circumference of your head.

It is difficult to look forty-five years into the future. Much water will flow under the bridges, I will be 77, if still alive. Perhaps \$50,000 will not mean as comfortable a nest egg as it does now. However, it always has and I believe it will then. It will be \$50,000 that is sure. And at the age of 45 you will be in a position to have it do you some good. The \$20.00 should not be difficult for you to maintain.

F. S.—Another evil that this plan might develop is that as your earning capacity may increase, you might be constrained not to save the proper proportion over the \$20.00 monthly, which your income would justify. That is, you might adopt the attitude that as long as you keep up the \$20.00 monthly, you are doing your full duty and would then proceed to squander all the rest. This would be another extreme in which I am sure your better judgment will not permit you to indulge.

## RADIATOR AND BATTERY REPAIRS

I have just installed my full and complete equipment for Radiator and Battery Repairs, and am now in a position to give the people of this section the very highest type of service in this connection. I have had years of experience in this work and the expert service I am prepared to render will meet with instant approval. I conduct the only shop in this section doing radiator work and guarantee satisfaction. I invite you to give me a trial.

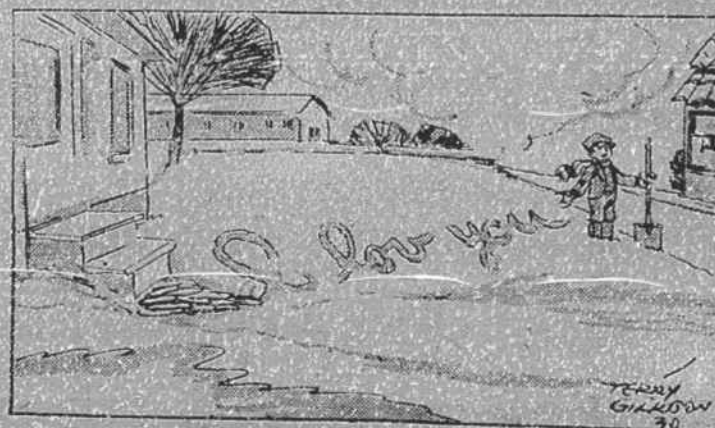
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## PINKY DINKY



**Pinky Dinky Jingles**

MARGE NEVER LIKED OUR BILL, HER HEART HE COULDN'T WIN; BUT WHEN HE TOOK HER SKATING— OH!—HOW SHE FELL FOR HIM.

BY TERRY GILKISON

By Terry Gilkison