

New Years Conspiracy

AS THEY drove up the icy gravel drive between the snow-laden evergreens, Margot asked, "Who are the guests?"

"There'll probably be a mob for dinner," Johnny explained as he opened the car door. "Sis always has a gang in on New Year's day."

Shouts of laughter and singing in the huge living room greeted them as the butler opened the door. Through the archway Margot caught a glimpse of Peg, Johnny's sister.

"Only the young could look forward to another year with such gaiety," she observed with amusement.

"I'm afraid," Margot said, "I couldn't keep up with the general enthusiasm before dinner. Isn't there some place we can observe without being observed?"

Johnny nodded toward a small conservatory opening on the living room. "There's a side door to that through the butler's pantry." He led the way.

Seating her on a love seat screened by a magnificent fern, he left to return with cocktails.

Margot took the glass absent-mindedly, her eyes on the group

around the piano. "Isn't that your Miss Leslie?"

He followed her gaze. A raven-haired, vivacious young girl was accompanying his sister in a duet. His secretary!

He nodded. "She seems a little different away from the office."

"She probably doesn't know you're here," Margot said.

"And just what do you mean by that?" Johnny asked.

"Oh, Johnny!" her voice was faintly malicious. "Don't tell me you haven't guessed. Why, the girl is simply delirious about you."

His laugh was spontaneous. "Now who's being romantic?"

"She told me," Margot answered evenly.

Johnny stared, open-mouthed. "Honestly?"

His mind searched back over his three years' association with Miss Leslie. Incident after incident cropped up to bolster Margot's assertion.

"Men are stupid, aren't they?" Margot shook her head slowly. "Only blind."

Johnny looked at his watch. "It's about time for my weekly proposal," he said, grinning.

Margot lit a cigarette. Through the smoke she said, "And your weekly rejection."

"Well," his voice seemed strangely carefree, "in that case I won't propose."

The couples in the other room were dancing now. Johnny's eyes were following his secretary, moving lithely about the polished floor in perfect accord with the intricate pattern of her partner's steps.

"Graceful, isn't she?"

"And beautiful," Margot said. Johnny nodded.

"And young."

He looked over at the words, faintly flushed, aware for the second time that day of the disparity between his age and Margot's.

"But not nearly so beautiful nor so graceful as you." His voice lacked conviction.

Margot bowed primly. "But younger."

Just before dinner, Johnny said, "We really should go in and say 'hello' to Miss Leslie. If she knows we're here she must think us rude."

Margot yawned. "I'm too comfortable. You'd better, though. You know, keep up the old office morale."

Margot watched him as he sauntered a shade too casually over to the group once again around the piano. Even at a distance the eagerness with which the girl greeted him was apparent.

Dinner was announced. Someone suggested, "Just one more song. A song for the new year."

Peg struck an opening chord, the group joined hands and voices lifted in singing "Auld Lang Syne." Johnny, his hand incasing his secretary's, was by no means the quietest.

Peg was secretly smiling at Miss Leslie. Miss Leslie's eyes were directed toward the conservatory. "Thanks," she seemed to say to Margot.

Released by Western Newspaper Union.



New Year's Eve Festive Occasion For Native Scots

Christmas never aroused much enthusiasm in Scotland—but on New Year's eve the Wassail bowl goes around, filled with savory liquid, nostalgically fragrant.

Floating atop the Wassail bowl, apples stir memories of the "apple-howling" when boys switched the trunks of fruit trees petitioning "a good howling crop"; somehow, the "lamb's wool" (as the decoction of the Wassail bowl is often called) seems reminiscent of young folks rushing to the nearest spring at the stroke of 12 to drink the "cream of the well"—the first one so doing, might expect good luck during the ensuing year.

Hansel Monday—the Monday after New Year's, is traditionally the "big day" for Scotch boys and girls; and, in addition to being the Scotch day of gift-giving, it is a day of feasting and gaiety.

Small wonder, that families and friends gather on New Year's eve to "Drink a cup of kindness yet For Auld Lang Syne."

Tell Me an Indian New Year's Story

The ceremonial for the snow has passed, when enemies are forgiven and harsh words forgotten, as a new trail has been blazed for all through the New Year's festivities.

The story-telling grandmother has taught the ancient chants and customs through the beads of the strings of historic wampum; but now she again has time to entertain the children.

Gathered around her lodge-fire, they plead for another story with their bright eyes and shrill voices. To satisfy them, she tells an ancient legend about the clouds.

"Long moons ago when the world was first made, the sky at wintertime was cloudless much as it is on clear midsummer days. The ground was covered with white snow and the trees, except the pines, stood bare. The cold wind whistled around the bark cabins; and with a cloudless sky, everything above and below looked dreary.

"The children, too, missed the green leaves and changing colors over the landscape and they gave a wish that the sky might have clouds now and then. It is true, dark-gray, fierce-looking clouds came in great masses and covered all the sky and let down snowflakes to amuse the children. But the children also wished for bright clouds and the old bear in the sky heard their wishes.

"So the old bear blew his moist breath into the heavy clouds and broke them up; he even made humps in some of them, and held on to the corners of others, until when they passed over the village, each cloud had a different shape, some like bears, some like wild cats, some like hills and even some like funny people. Ever afterward, the clouds took these strange shapes to bring smiles and imagination to all children in midwinter."—Dr. E. A. Bates, Cornell.

Latin American growers will produce a substantial supply of Manilla hemp, which was cut off by the advance of the Japanese in the Pacific.

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1945 GREETINGS

JANUARY is the open gate of the year. All around the landscape is dreary and the winds whistle bleakly.

But there's plenty of cheer indoors. A jolly young guest is due to arrive on New Year's Eve, and we're going to give him a royal welcome.

HAPPY NEW YEAR, EVERYBODY!

And loads of good luck to you in 1945.

EURE BROS.
Contractors

New Year Greeting

I saw the hills of the morning,
The form of the new year arise;
He stood like a statue adorning
The world with a background of skies;
There was courage and grace in his beautiful face,
And hope in his glorious eyes.

"I come from Time's boundless forever,"
He said, with a voice like a song;
"I come as a friend to endeavor,
I come as a foe to all wrong.
To the sad and afraid I bring promise of aid,
And the weak I shall gird and make strong.

"I bring you more blessings than terrors,
I bring you more sunlight than gloom,
I tear out your page of old errors,
And hide them away in Time's tomb;
I reach you clean hands and lead on to the lands,
Where the lilies of peace are in bloom."

'Open House' on New Year's Day

It was customary for the Dutch settlers of New York to hold "open house" on New Year's day and to provide light refreshments, usually centering around a large bowl of punch, for friends calling to pay the compliments of the season.

During the latter part of the 19th century the custom of making short calls on New Year's day was in full swing throughout America. Metropolitan newspapers carried columns of "at home" notices which, including names of social prominence and those making no such pretense, announced hours during which visitors would be received; having duly received, hosts and hostesses closed their receptions to join the procession of callers at other "open houses."

A succession of "open houses" and punch bowls minimized the courtesy accorded hostesses—in many cases—and even resulted in receptions being "crashed" by bibulous young men; these abuses led to the abandonment of the "open house" custom. New Year's calls now being exchanged only by intimates and without any public announcement of intention to receive.

Celebrant



This attractive young Chinese girl adds her bit to the celebration of New Year's eve in New York festivities. The Chinese new year—4611—begins considerably later than our own.

Holidays and Special Events of New Year

The year 1945 is not a leap year, so February will again have the usual 28 days. The holidays and special events for the new year will be as follows:

Lincoln's birthday, February 12; Washington's birthday, February 22; St. Patrick's day, March 17; Easter, April 1; Mother's day, May 13; Memorial day, May 30; Father's day, June 17; Independence day, July 4; Labor day, September 3; Columbus day, October 12; Armistice day, November 11; Thanksgiving day, November 23; Christmas day, December 25.

Mexican Clock
Many Mexican families still observe the "old clock system" on New Year's eve. On a table in a main room of the house, lighted candles surround a tiny casket, upon which stands a clock. On the stroke of midnight the clock is stopped, placed in the casket and buried in the garden, symbolizing the passing of the old year.

First to See Year
The little British colony on Hanson Island, in the Chatham's, 414 miles southeast of Wellington, New Zealand, will be the first to greet 1945. It is just east of the international date line, from which all time is reckoned.

The United States has increased its rice crop by 52 per cent over 10 years ago. Production is now 70,000,000 bushels.



We All Send New Year Greetings

All of our best wishes and all of our best efforts will be with you in the New Year as they were in the old. You can count upon us to do our utmost to deserve your continued confidence during 1945.

BEN'S BICYCLE & STOVE SHOP

BIGGS SHOE SHOP



★ Freedom of Opportunity is an American heritage. It was this, more than all else, that made America great.

We hope that 1945 will offer each of you more abundant means of turning "the American way" to better account—that each day will bring you more and richer blessings.

Rumley's Seed & Feed Store



There are many paths in life but the path that leads to home is the one we all love best. May 1945 bring to your home a joyous strengthening of home ties and old associations, and a happy gain in the number of those you count as friends. May it bring you more health, more prosperity, more joy of living.

This is the sincere New Year wish of

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U. S. egg production for 11 months this year is 54 billion eggs, 6 per cent above last year and 50 per cent above the ten-year average.



New Year's is at hand. Take over, Spirit of Youth! All aboard for the better days to come.

May a ray of sunshine fall upon that new page to which we now turn. This is our wish for you.

J. D. BIGGS
BEAUFORT, N. C.



Hope for Tomorrow

Whatever the past year may have brought, we all look forward hopefully to 1945 as a harbinger of better days to come.

It is our hope, too, that in the New Year we will be more than neighbors... that we will become better neighbors.

Season's greetings to one and all.

SEA BREEZE THEATRE

Peanut Clusters: Mix together 1-2 cup dark corn sirup, 1-4 cup molasses, 1-8 teaspoon salt, and 1 tablespoon vinegar. Cook to 240 degrees or until a small quantity in water forms a soft ball. Add 2 tablespoons table fat; pour over 2 1-2 cups shelled roasted peanuts. Mix quickly. Drop by tablespoons on greased surface. Makes 20 clusters.



Happy New Year

with best wishes for carefree motor-ing and trucking in 1945

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Wishing a **NEW YEAR** of Happiness and Success 1945

★ We heartily believe in the New Year tradition... the ousting of the old to make way for the new.

May 1945 light the way to new pinnacles of achievement for you, as well as to new goals of health and contentment. Accept our heartiest New Year wishes.

GASKILL'S FEED STORE

'SHOULD AULD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT'



THIS New Year's Eve, more so than for many years past, the songs we sing and the merriment we indulge in flow from hearts that are lighter, for we all know now that the future is brighter, and we can look forward to 1945 with the conviction that much better things are in store for us.

With many thanks for past favors, and wishing you the full joys of this happy season, believe us to be ever at your service.

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