



By Ben Ames Williams

SYNOPSIS

The Salinas listens to the history of neighboring Hostile Valley, with guests of the mysterious, enticing "Huldy," wife of Will Ferrin. Interested, he drives to the Valley for a day's fishing, though admitting to himself his chief desire is to see the reputedly glamorous Huldy. "Old Marm" Pierce and her almost-teen-year-old granddaughter Jenny live in the Valley. Since little more than a child Jenny has at first attracted and then deeply loved young Will Ferrin, neighboring farmer, older than she, and who regards her still as merely a child. Will takes employment in nearby Augusta. Jenny is disconsolate.

That would not be downed. "You're just talking to make me argue about it, but I won't," she said; and she cried: "I don't care if he never does a lick of work, long as he does come home, Granny." And suddenly there were deep tears in her eyes and her voice was husky. She clung to the old woman. "I want to see him," she whispered. "I want to be with him," she said. "Seems like he's been gone so long."

CHAPTER II—Continued

"How do you know?" he challenged, curiously abashed by her calm serenity. "You can't tell. You might get to . . ."

She shook her head. "Not you, Bart," she said simply. His clasped her arm relaxed, and she moved quietly away from him. There was in the move nothing in the least dramatic; and yet Bart perceived that there was in it nevertheless finality. He stared after her, baffled, rebuffed; he did not follow, stood where she had left him. And when she was gone he said only:

"Well, I'll be . . ."

He did not say what he would be; but later, on his way up the brook to his home, he grinned at his own discomfiture.

Win Haven was at the farm when he got there; and Bart confessed the incident. The older man demanded impatiently: "Shucks, why'n't you just grab on to her? Any woman, she has to be rushed. Bart. Took off her feet before she knows what's going on."

Bart shook his head. "Jenny knowed well enough what I wanted," he said in amused discomfiture. "Knowned before I did. Yes, sir, she was way out in front of me. I couldn't see nothing but her heels." And he urged: "You get in and have a glass of cider. How come you're around here again, anyway? I thought you'd gone."

"Got me a job in Liberty," Win explained. "But I can handle a glass of cider. Sure." He added boastfully: "Just the same, if I was a young one, and a ripe gal like that running wild in the woods around, I'd . . ." And he told, with a senile and fatuous unction, what he would do.

Jenny went home, but she said nothing about Bart. It was weeks later before Marm Pierce remarked one evening: "Wonder why Bart don't ever stop in, the way he used to? What's got into him, Jenny?"

Jenny told her, then, about that encounter by the brook; and the old woman chuckled with appreciation and contentment, sure that Bart need worry her no more.

That was an open winter in the Valley, with little snow, and deep frost; and the mud in the spring was worse than usual. It was mid-May before a plow could be put in the ground, June before the cloids could be broken. But in the last week of May Jenny heard that Will Ferrin was coming home.

Jenny, though she had said nothing to the older woman, had been expecting word of him; he had told her, on that day of his father's funeral, that he would return this year. It did not occur to her that Will might change his mind, that he might do less than he had planned. Through the long month of May she slipped away at brief intervals, and threaded the wood toward the brook—her feet had begun to mark there a permanent trail—and climbed to the Ferrin farm to see whether he had come. Day by day the house stood shuttered and empty, and she returned to the long weariness of waiting. Yet the ripeness of spring made longings all her heart, and one day she came home to Marm Pierce with shining eyes.

The old woman had long since guessed where Jenny went on these excursions; she saw the girl's face glow, and chuckled, and asked shrewdly:

"Will home, is he?"

Jenny looked startled; then the deep color flooded her cheeks. "No, Granny," she said. "But Est Frens is plowing the lower field, and he told me Will had wrote and hired him to do it. Said Will wanted to get here Monday."

Marm Pierce smirked scornfully. "You've worked for day after day as long he thinks money's coming by. Hiring work done by night full as well do his own set. Guess he couldn't come no more than he had a mind."

Jenny laughed at her. There was something happiness in the girl

as possible from the door, and stood there, her hands outspread, her wide eyes shining, her cheeks pale. She stared at the door with an incredible fixity, waiting, not breathing; her breast ached from the pounding of her heart, vibrated like the taut head of a beaten drum.

He came in and looked around; and at first, since she was so still, he did not see her. But then his puzzled eyes found her, and the quick welcoming light in them gave her courage.

"It's me, Will," she said. "Come in. All's ready for you here. Welcome home."

"Jenny?" he cried. "Why, Jen, I take this neighborly of you folks. Where's Granny?"

"Home," she told him.

"You do all this?" he asked, delightedly.

"I didn't want you coming to a cold empty house," she said. "Supper's all ready; or it can be in ten minutes. Chicken stew, and doughnuts, and blueberry pie; and there are biscuits ready to bake, and the oven's hot." She moved toward him, finding her limbs at last unswerving her will. "Come in, Will. Take off your hat," she bade him. "Set down and I'll . . ."

The word died in her throat. For behind Will, in the open doorway, a woman had appeared. Jenny saw her, and she stared; and the woman smiled. Then Will, perceiving Jenny's countenance what had happened, turned, and took the woman gently by the arm and drew

her into the kitchen to stand there beside him.

"Jenny," he said proudly, "this here's my wife. This is Huldy."

Dreadful aching agony of emptiness; strength draining sickeningly away.

"Huldy," said Will, "Jenny's come and made all ready for us. I told you that folks was friendly here."

Huldy smiled; something in her faint mirth at once insolent and provocative, at once arrogant and acquiescent.

"She looks mighty friendly to you, Will," she said, a barb in the words.

"Why, she is," Will declared, blithely content. "Always was. She wa'n't but a young one when I see her the last time, the time Pa died." He turned to Jenny. "You're real grown up now, Jenny," he said.

The word somehow lent Jenny strength. Her spine stiffened and her pulse slowed and her tone was calm. "You come in and set, Miss Ferrin," she said equably. "I guess you're tired. You make yourself to home, and I'll get supper on."

But when this task was done, she would not stay to eat with them. Valor would not sustain her so far. "It's late, Will," she explained. "If you'd come earlier, I might stay and wash dishes; but Granny will be wondering about me now."

And when supper was on the table Jenny bade them both good night, in strong steady tones, and took herself away. Out through the barn, down the orchard slope, down the steep trail to the stream.

She went blundering through the dark woods, her eyes hot and dry with tears that would not flow.

CHAPTER III

WHEN Jenny, struggling through the deep woods, her eyes burning for the antidotes of tears, emerged at last into the open meadow land and saw the dim bulb of the barn ahead, she ran stumblingly, in haste to come home to Marm Pierce and the old woman's understanding arms. She rounded the barn and saw a light in the kitchen; but she saw too a team here in the yard, and so was warned that her grandmother was not alone, and had time to steady herself before she came to the kitchen door.

Bart was here. He had been in Liberty village when Will drove through, had hailed Will and heard an answering call; but Will did not halt, so Bart had not seen Huldy. Yet he had seen, dimly, the form of a woman in the seat beside Will; and before Jenny arrived now, he had told this much to old Marm Pierce, sitting by the stove before the open oven door.

"Brought some one to keep house for him, like as not," was the opinion he hazarded; but Marm Pierce knew misgivings, even before Jenny appeared. Jenny came in composedly enough, but her countenance was a haggard mask, eloquent of torment and of pain; and Marm Pierce rose quickly and came between the girl and Bart to shield Jenny from his eyes.

"He come finally, did he, Jen?" she asked. "You're late enough."

"He only just got there," Jenny explained. "I stayed to put the supper on."

Marm Pierce nodded, and she told Jenny: "Bart see Will go through the village. He says as how there was a woman with him in the car."

Jenny said in husky tones, "Yes, Granny. It's his wife. Will's got married."

Her voice was terribly steady, as rigid as steel. Marm Pierce was shocked motionless; and even Bart could in this moment read Jenny's secret in her eyes. Before the old woman could move, he stood up and came toward the girl.

"Why, Jen," he said warmly, "I guessed you liked Will pretty well yore own self, didn't you?" He chuckled, yet not in a fashion to cause her any pain. "I always had a notion you did," he confessed. "I knew with him around there wa'n't a chance for me, but when he went away, I kind of thought . . ."

And he urged: "Don't you grieve for Will, Jen! There's men enough, not as fine as him maybe, but . . ."

Marm Pierce said harshly: "Bart, you shut your mouth. Let the child alone!"

Bart protested: "Ma'am, I'm sorry for her. I want to—kind of comfort her. I'd marry Jen in a minute if she'd have me. Guess she knows it, too."

"Well, she won't," the old woman told him. "Don't you see she wants to cry now? You go along and get out of here."

And she bundled him unceremoniously through the door. Bart, outside, climbed into his buggy, wondered at the sudden flooding order which had made him speak so openly. He had no least mind to marry; yet there had been in Jenny's eyes just now something so broken with longing and deep hunger that he had been swept into a folly of words, into an unaccustomed forgetfulness, eager to assuage her grief. Will, he thought, was blind and dumb and blamable; he had a quixotic impulse to go thrash the other man for falling to see that Jenny loved him, for falling to understand.

Jenny, alone with her grandmother, wept long weary tears, till she slept at last from very pain and deep fatigue; and old Marm Pierce sat by her long, that night, brooding over the hurt child, tender and fond. Already she bated Huldy Ferrin for hurting Jenny so.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Lace Is Everywhere This Season

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



IN THE progress of fashion there is ever one dominating note which gives impetus to the season's style trends. This spring and summer it's lace. What with the featuring of fashionable evening frocks, beach outfits, sports clothes and daytime tailcoats to fine millinery and gracious evening array made all of lace, and after that amazingly beautiful lace ball which was recently given in New York where everyone wore lace, the guests as well as those who took part in the gorgeous pageantry which was staged so picturesquely, we are coming to know more about lace than we have ever known before.

When all has been said and done, the present season will go down in history as an era in which lace really came into its own—as a period which marks the development of a new appreciation for lace, a new feeling, a new lace sense as it were. Up to now, in the minds of most of us lace had its limitations, was rather a luxury to be reserved for occasions of more or less dressy tendency. Henceforth, with modern laces being that versatile they range from sturdiest sportsy cotton and hardy linen types to be used in fabric way, to laces so delicate and of so fragile a beauty the traditional cobweb will have to look to its laurels, theories in regard to the restricted possibilities of lace have had to give way to last-coming conviction that the practicality and the adaptability of lace to every phase of fashion, measures up 100 per cent to that of any other member of the fabric realm.

So it is we find lace going everywhere this season, no matter how formal or how informal the event. Then lace, either cotton or linen, you can choose nothing smarter for your tailored suit or your simple daytime frock.

A most fetching idea is to wear a blouse of monotone chiffon (chiffon is the rage for blouses) with your tailored-of-lace-jacket suit. See centered in the picture this partnership of chiffon blouse and lace two-piece suit. Here we have an afternoon ensemble in brown lace in neat all-over patterning. Pearl buttons and a peasant gather made all of lace, and after that amazingly beautiful lace ball which was recently given in New York where everyone wore lace, the guests as well as those who took part in the gorgeous pageantry which was staged so picturesquely, we are coming to know more about lace than we have ever known before.

The stunning costume to the right in the group demonstrates how beautifully and appropriately lace can be used for spectator sports wear. It is of natural color cotton lace with a bright green silk tie. Which reminds, if you would trek along fashion's high-style path, wear vivid green accessories with your grege or your biege or your pure white costumes this summer. Notice the very good-looking hat which tops this spectator-sports outfit. It is made entirely of starched lace in the same pattern as that used for the suit with which it is worn.

A bit dressier, yet not too dressy for going about places during the daytime hours is that most attractive frock which the young woman seated is wearing. The lace is smart white linen with accents of blue in the sleeve and collar binding and the bows down the front, also the tie-belt. A large blue straw hat completes the ensemble.

By the way, have you a lace cap in your summer collection of prettiest clothes? You really must not overlook this intriguing item of fashion. Border it with a double fold of net in matching color and finish the neck with a huge pleated ruch of the net. It is practical in black and in pastel colors—well, just try it out for yourself.

SUMMER COAT

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



as possible from the door, and stood there, her hands outspread, her wide eyes shining, her cheeks pale. She stared at the door with an incredible fixity, waiting, not breathing; her breast ached from the pounding of her heart, vibrated like the taut head of a beaten drum.

HOSE ARE ADAPTED TO CUT-OUT SANDALS

Sandal shoppers who have been buying all the newest models in these most revealing trifles masquerading as summer footwear have possibly been more than a little troubled by the problem of proper stockings to wear with these high fashion slippers. But the hosiery designers have kept in step, and the last arrivals ready for sandal collectors are the semi-sandal hose.

As you may surmise, the extra thickness is distributed over the area where it will do the most good, but so cleverly restrained that even the most cut-out of sandals show only the sheerest part of the hose. Heel reinforcements, as well as the toe sections and the long, very-narrow panel under the foot, make them ideal numbers. Very sheer and not so sheer stockings in all of the newest of summer tints, tones, and shades, with a fleet of fancy new names, are now ready.

Lanvin-Designed Draperies

Fall in Swirled Festoons
Lanvin, this season, designs draperies which fall in portiere-like draperies of swirled festoons. From three great gold rings at the front decolette of the evening gown she swings drapery of rich black silk crepe falling to the floor.

She makes a smoke gray crepe afternoon frock with a skirt whose criss-crossed folds swoop from the waist to the hem and back again, and fashions a long-sleeved green crepe evening gown with skirt panels working in green and gold paillettes like an old mosaic.

Vells Move Back
Hang your veil off the back of your hat if you wish to be both "different" and chic.

MOUNTAIN IN OCEAN

A mountain peak 11,000 feet high has been found rising from the bottom of the sea, 60 miles off San Nicolas Island, off the coast of Long Beach, Calif., according to Capt. O. W. Swainson, commander of the coast and geodetic survey ship Flo-ecer.

When Sentiment Fades
At a certain period in one's life souvenirs become junk.

How Cardui Helps Women to Build Up

Cardui stimulates the appetite and improves digestion, helping women to get more strength from the food they eat. As nourishment is improved, strength is built up, certain functional pains go away and women praise Cardui for helping them back to good health. Mrs. C. E. Rafick, of Hinton, W. Va., writes: "After the birth of my last baby, I did not seem to get my strength back. I took Cardui again and was soon sound and well. I have given it to my daughters and recommended it to other ladies." Thousands of women testify Cardui benefited them. If it does not benefit YOU, consult a physician.

Soviet "Luxury Train"
Radio, telephones, a library and a special car for "culture and rest" are some of the features of a "luxury train" running between Moscow and Tiflis, Russia.

KILL BLACK WIDOW

The deadly Black Widow spider's bite is decidedly dangerous to people. Kill All Spiders... Watch for them in garages, corners of porches, etc. The minute you see them spray THOROUGHLY with FLY-TOX. It also kills FLIES, MOSQUITOES and other insects. Be sure you get FLY-TOX

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