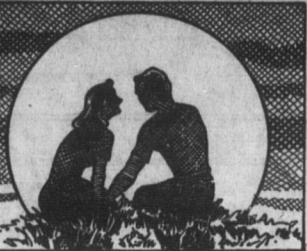


TOMORROW'S PROMISE

by Temple Bailey



CHAPTER VI

Synopsis

Anne Ordway, nineteen, is shocked when she realizes that their old friend, David Elliott, is in love with her beautiful mother, Elinor. Anne adores both her mother and her father, Francis. One night she and Garry Brooks find a man making coffee over a fire in a meadow—a charming young man who gives his name only as Charles. After Anne has left him, Charles, through a second story window in Anne's house, sees a beautiful woman—not Anne—take something from a dressing table. Next morning Anne misses her pearls, and Garry Brooks suggests that the stranger took them. Charles is injured in an automobile accident—and turns out to be Charles Patterson, member of an old and respected family, in the news because of his wife's sensational charges in her divorce suit. He tells Vicky, Anne's companion, while recuperating from an injury at Anne's house, that he believes he saw Elinor take the pearls. Accused by Vicky, Elinor admits her guilt. Vicky promises to get the pearls from the pawnbroker where Elinor has taken them and persuades Francis not to investigate.

Elinor had written: "I am going away—tonight—with David. I can't face Francis, so I'm not coming back. The pawn tickets and the key are in my desk. Some day I'll send you the money. You will look after Anne, Vicky? I'm not sorry—except about Anne. I love her."

Vicky stood in the middle of the floor and wondered what had happened. For Elinor had not gone. She was in her room at that very moment. Then why had she written that letter?

The next morning Elinor made her explanation. "David wouldn't go," she said, "when it came to the final decision. He says that he wants to take me honestly, and that I must tell Francis. So I came back and now I've got to face it."

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through with it?"

"Yes."

"But—Anne?"

"She will have to know."

"Have you thought what it will do to her?" Vicky demanded.

"She must take her turn," said Elinor darkly.

"At finding the world as it is. But I don't want to think of Anne. I want to think of myself. What did Francis say about the pearls?"

"He is leaving everything to me. I am going to Baltimore this morning."

"Does he suspect?"

"How can I tell?" There was a hint of impatience in Vicky's voice.

"I told him nothing."

Elinor made an unexpected apology. "I don't know what made me do it. But I was driven."

Vicky said inexorably, "If you go with David, what then?"

"I want happiness," Elinor rose and moved about restlessly.

"I want happiness and I am going to have it."

Vicky flamed, "Perhaps you call it happiness to spoil the life of a child like Anne. But I am not here to criticize you. All I ask is that you take time to think what you are doing."

I don't want to think. I am going to tell everything to Francis tonight. And that will be the end of it."

"It will not be the end. It will be the beginning."

"Of chaos for all of us."

But Elinor would not listen, and when Vicky left at last for Baltimore it was with fear clutching at her heart. She hated the whole thing, for she had had no experience with pawnshops but, having accomplished her errand, she returned after luncheon and took the pearls at once to Elinor.

Elinor, vastly relieved, said, "You've been wonderful, Vicky. I'll see that you get your money back when Francis gives me my allowance."

"How will you explain it all to Anne?"

"I wish you'd do it. Tell her you found them in an unexpected place."

Vicky was grim. "It was unexpected all right, so I shan't be lying."

Later Vicky played out the little farce, with Charles aiding and abetting her. She found Anne in his room reading aloud, and as she displayed the length of glimmering whiteness Anne said, "Oh, Vicky, where in the world did you find them?"

"In an unexpected place."

"It often happens that way," said Charles. "One looks and looks and then suddenly things turn up as if some evil spirit had whisked them away and put them back again."

Anne was philosophical. "Well, anyhow, I'm glad they weren't stolen."

And Charles, with a vision

upon him of that thief in rose-color, changed the subject. "I'm leaving tomorrow," he told Vicky.

"Oh, surely not!"

"Yes. I must not impose too long on your hospitality."

Anne said, "You're not imposing. Is he Vicky?"

"No. There's a perfectly good week-end ahead of you, Mr. Patterson. Why not spend it with us?"

His smiling eyes went from Vicky to Anne. "I'm afraid."

Anne demanded, "Of what?"

"Of you?"

"Yes. When you came to me in that moonlit meadow, it did something to me."

Color flamed in her cheeks. "If you really meant that, it would be nice."

"Nice? Isn't there a bigger word for it than that?"

"What word?"

"Heavenly."

Vicky interposed, "Am I supposed to be listening?"

"Of course."

"Then I might suggest that this is rather strong wine for Anne's little head."

Charles laughed and Anne laughed with him. It was all very light-hearted and on the surface, but Anne, dressing that night for dinner, looked starry-eyed into her mirror. Did he, she wondered, mean it? But he couldn't. He was married.

She did not see him alone again, but when the next morning he had gone she found a note on her dresser:

"This is my real good-bye, my dear. I shall not see you again. I am tarred with a brush which must not smirch you. But at night when I sleep under the stars I shall look up and see you shining, too far away for me to reach, but giving always a lovely light."

With her heart beating wildly she went to bed. What did it matter, she asked herself, if he were married? He would worship afar off. Like Dante and Beatrice. It would be wonderful to think of Charles as Dante.

To Anne, dressing for a ride on the morning after Charles' departure, was brought a message from her mother. She was to come at once to the library.

Hurrying down, she found both of her parents waiting. She kissed her father, then her mother. "Why did you get up so early, darling?"

"I've been up all night," Elinor was lighting a cigarette and her hand trembled. "Anne, we have something to tell you."

The fears that had assailed Anne in the garden swept back upon her. She looked from her mother to her father. "What is it, Daddy?"

When Francis had spoken Anne stood very still, the color drained from her face. For the thing that her father told her was this—that he and his wife would no longer live together.

"Do you mean there's to be a divorce, Daddy?"

"Yes."

Elinor interposed, "We may as well tell her the truth, Francis."

He lifted his hand impatiently. "Why weigh her down with it?"

"She'll have to know sometime. It's this way, Anne. I've found someone else. What has happened has happened. But I won't take all the blame. Your father is no better than I—venomously—only he has not been quite honest about it."

"It's true, my darling," Francis said hastily. "Our world isn't your world. But we love you."

Anne, frozen with horror, managed to say, "I thought when people married it was—forever."

Out of a dead silence Francis said, "Don't judge us too harshly."

"I'm not judging." He was standing close to her and she turned and hid her face against his shoulder. When at last she raised her head it was to ask with a note of desperation, "What are you going to do about me?"

Elinor hesitated. "We had thought you might like to go away with Vicky for a time and make up your mind about—us."

"Make up my mind?"

"Yes. Whether you will live with me until I get my divorce? Or go with your father? He insists upon my staying here until everything is settled."

To Anne it seemed in that moment as if her father and mother had receded from the foreground of her life where she had always placed them, to some dark region where her mind could not follow.

She murmured unsteadily, "I love you both and now I've got to give you up."

Her father said sharply, "Give us up?"

"Yes. When I go with Vicky I shan't come back. I shan't come back—ever."

As she went away Elinor and Francis stared at each other. This was their punishment; that the daughter whom they adored would have none of them.

Yet when the moment of separation came, Anne wept in Francis' arms and clung to her mother. "Can't we all go back?" she wailed, "just as we were? Can't we?"

And Francis said, "Can't we, Elinor?"

"No. Not even for her sake."

So Anne said farewell to all the happy things which had belonged to her girlhood and went by

motor to the Eastern Shore. There, in a long low rumbling farmhouse, lived Vicky's parents with their three daughters. There were two sons; older than Vicky, married, with farms of their own and with children growing up about them. When they were all assembled at the Hewitt homestead, John Hewitt, the father, seemed a patriarch among them.

It was a warm and comfortable household. Mrs. Hewitt, plump and pretty, loved her family and lived for it. Of old Maryland stock, she carried on the tradition of expert housekeeping and epicurean cookery. Her three daughters—Lettice, Lois and Mary-Lee—were neither plump nor pretty. They had, indeed, more than mere prettiness. Their hair was bright and their teeth were white, and their skins tanned by sun and wind. Lettice, the oldest, was engaged to a young engineer at work nearby on a government project. They would be married as soon as Lettice wound up certain matters of business for her father. Lettice kept the books and handled correspondence; Lois managed the stables and barns and Mary-Lee, the youngest, raised ducklings and squabs for the market.

The contrast between life on the farm—so warm, so flowing, so flexible—and the artificialities from which she had come, seemed to Anne amazing. Why couldn't all families be like this? Elinor's tension, Francis' surface composure with a volcano boiling beneath, David's surrender of his ideals, the glitter and brittleness of people like the Dorsays. Were they not all puppets pulled by a string?

"What makes the difference?" she demanded of Vicky.

"Well, perhaps it's because my family believes in things," Vicky said. "Your people don't. They live for sensations. For excitement."

"I shall never go back," Anne declared.

Vicky wrote to Francis:

"Let her alone for a time. You are a part of something that has hurt her dreadfully. But she loves you and misses you. Be very sure of that. It was her love that made the truth so painful."

(Continued Next Week)

Nearly one million motorists visited the Skyline Drive last year.

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Mr. and Mrs. Lee Shore had as their Sunday dinner guests Mr. and Mrs. Bonson Cothern and Miss Mary Burchette, of State Road, and Mr. and Mrs. Eford Collins.

Mr. Wallace VanHoy, of Buffalo, N. Y., Mr. Graham VanHoy and Mrs. Hugh Howard were the Sunday afternoon guests of their uncle, Mr. Tom VanHoy, and family.

Mr. Wint Shore is erecting a nice new home on his farm south of Mountain View church.

Mr. and Mrs. Roby Riley and little son, Billie, were the Sunday afternoon guests of Mr. Riley's sister, Mrs. M. W. King, and family.

Mrs. Nannie Collins and Mrs. Maude Shore spent the past week-end at State Road visiting their father, Mr. Granville Burchette, and Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Burchette.

Little Miss Eloise Holleman, of Hanes, spent the week-end with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Holcomb.

Mr. and Mrs. Willie Snow were recent visitors of Mr. Snow's parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Snow, of Yadkinville.

Mr. and Mrs. John Henry Stokes had as their Sunday guests Mr. and Mrs. Beecher Stokes, Mrs. Lillian Riley, of Winston-Salem, and Mrs. R. P. Riley, of Marler.

The Tigon is the offspring of a tiger and a lioness.

NOTICE OF SALE OF LAND

By virtue of the authority vested in a certain deed of trust executed to the undersigned trustee by P. C. Boles and husband, J. E. Boles, dated December 27, 1924, and recorded in Book 84, page 133, in the office of Register of Deeds of Surry County, N. C., default having been made in payment of the notes therein secured, at the request of the holder of said notes I will sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash at the Post Office door in Elkin, N. C., on Saturday, November 18, 1939, at 11 o'clock A. M., the following described land:

Situate on the West side of Bridge Street in the Town of Elkin, N. C., and fronting on Bridge Street 50 feet and extending back West of the same width 150 feet and being known as Lots Nos. 11 and 12 in Block 6 as shown on map of Elkin Land Company, recorded in the Office of Register of Deeds of Surry County in Book 29, page 600, to which reference is made for further description.

This sale made subject to the lien for unpaid taxes.

This the 18th day of October, 1939.

W. T. WOODRUFF, Trustee.

11-9

NOTICE OF SALE OF LAND

By virtue of the authority vested in a certain deed of trust executed to W. R. Badgett, trustee, by J. W. Venable and his wife Mary Venable, dated September 4, 1929, recorded in book 114, page 195, in the office of the Register of Deeds of Surry County, N. C., default having been made in payment of the note therein secured, at the request of the holder of said note, I will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, for cash at the courthouse door of Surry County, in Dobson, N. C., on Monday, November 13, 1939, at 12:00 o'clock noon the following described real estate, to-wit:

"Beginning on a stake and

pointers in Armenthe Flinchum line on West side of Gracy Nob and runs East 13.46 chains to the persimmon corner, stake in old road, also Luther Holland Corner, South with Holland Line 16½ chains to rock Holland Corner, Flinchum's former corner, West with Flinchum line 13½ chains to stake Armita Flinchum. Then North 16½ chains to the beginning. The above land covers one acre formerly surveyed off for Elizabeth Denny by Martha Denny, but was never conveyed to her as set out in former conveyance. This land sold subject to the right of way of Town of Pilot Mountain for electric power line."

Sale made to satisfy principal, interest and cost of sale to add.

This 10th day of October, 1939.

W. R. BADGETT, Trustee.

11-9

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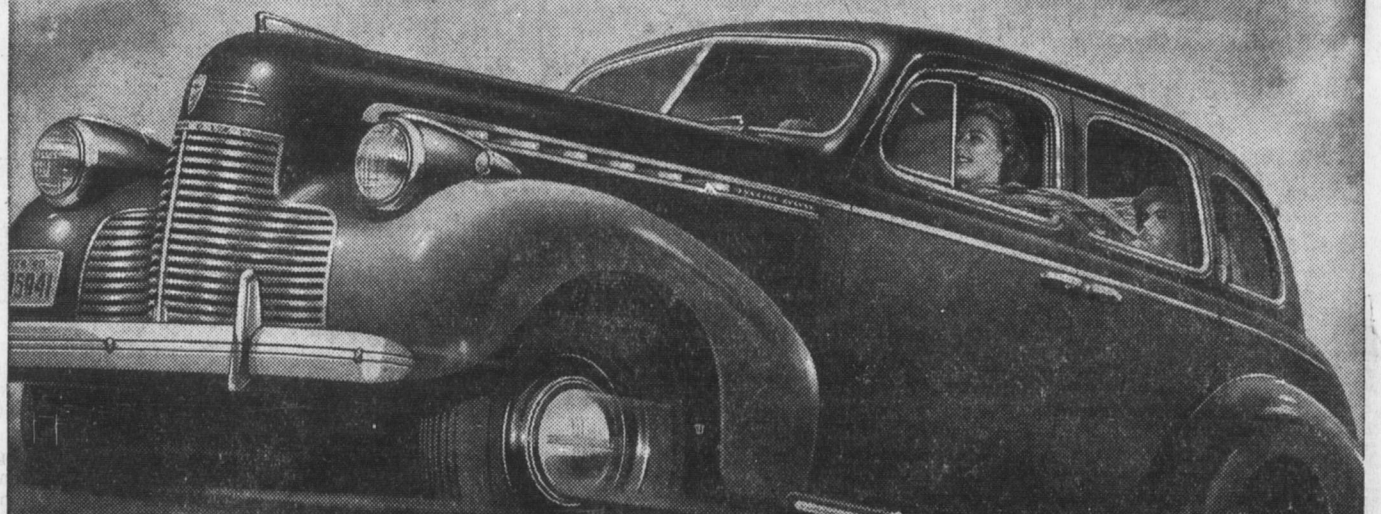
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