

HEARTS WALKING

Mrs. Harry Pugh Smith

CHAPTER III
Synopsis
Janet Phillips finds herself left out of things when her wealthier friends in Bay City come home from their finishing schools and colleges. Priscilla Leigh—at the moment interested in Janet's old friend Gordon Key—is making herself disagreeable. Gordon has just broken a date with Janet to go to a dinner at Priscilla's. Jim Phillips, Janet's brother, has run into the pampered Howard Leigh and Helen Sanders on the golf links. Jim is subbing as golf pro for the summer and offers to give Miss Sanders lessons. Although he doesn't like her, he is fascinated. Meanwhile, Janet goes to the apartment of her sister, Berenice. Berenice has just paid off

her bridge losses and asked her guests of the afternoon to leave before her husband Bill comes home and sees the highball glasses.

The moment the door closed behind her friends Berenice began emptying ash trays and disposing of highball glasses. "Would you mind carrying these ginger ale bottles out to the trash barrel in the hall, Janet?" she asked. "I don't dare leave them lying around the apartment. Bill's a regular Sherlock Holmes at spotting evidence."

Janet felt a little sick. "Don't you think it's awfully cheap to do things behind Bill's back?" she asked when she returned.

"If Bill weren't so unreasonable I wouldn't have to," muttered

Berenice, hastily putting the percolator on.

She was a small, curved person with a dimple in her left cheek and skin like a gardenia. Her eyes were red-brown too and she had extravagant black lashes and lovely little feet and hands. To Janet, who was taller and whose black hair did not curl, Berenice had always seemed absurdly childish, in spite of the three years' difference in their ages.

"Bill is sweet when we are alone together," admitted Berenice and sighed. "No one could be sweeter, but he's so dreadfully narrow."

Janet's voice was unsteady. "You aren't a very striking advertisement for love in a cottage. I mean you were so in love with Bill I used to envy you. Now all the icing seems to have come off the wedding cake, or has it?"

She did not know exactly why, but she needed desperately to be reassured about many things which until recently it had never occurred to her to doubt. But there was nothing reassuring in the bitterness which hardened Berenice's piquant face so that all at once she looked years older.

"Love's a lot of phooey, Janet," she said in a curt, disillusioned voice. "It's the honey with which nature baits the trap. For heaven's sake, take me for an example, and don't be the kind of saps we've been!"

"I don't believe Mother regrets having married a poor man!" cried Janet breathlessly, because even to think such a thing was as if a fist had landed on her heart.

"Listen, Janet," said Berenice, looking intense, "you don't have to tell me that Mother's swell at making the best of a bad bargain, but don't kid yourself. I don't care how much you love a man, after you've been married to him a year or so you wonder where you ever got the idea that love makes up for everything."

"Hullo," said Bill gruffly, tossing his hat over on the overstuffed couch and scowling when it landed on a pile of gayly colored magazines and slid to the floor.

"Hello," said Berenice, putting a plate of sliced bread down on the table with an ungentle thump.

"Janet, I didn't see you!" exclaimed Bill, his face lighting. "How's my nice little sister?"

"All right, I guess," murmured Janet dubiously. "All the members of Berenice's family were fond of Bill Carter. He was a big, self-conscious young chap with thick black hair, a lock of which was continually falling down over his eyes. When he smiled he had an engaging boyish look which offset his protruding jaw and the stubborn line of his mouth."

"Going to feed with us?" he asked.

Janet shook her head. "I have to go out to the club for Jim." Bill was staring at the table on which Berenice had just deposited with another thump a slender platter of warmed-over beans. "You're lucky," he said to Janet. "We're sipping out of a tin can as usual."

Berenice sniffed. "I'll say she's lucky. Nothing on her mind except what dress she'll wear to the dance tonight. Single girls have all the luck."

Bill scowled. "As you've mentioned before."

Janet glanced from Bill's lowering black eyes to Berenice's flushed cheeks and she swallowed painfully. "I guess I'll run on," she stammered.

"You can't be blamed for getting out before we start throwing things," said Bill, the corners of his mouth turning down like clamps.

"Yes," said Berenice, pushing a chair violently up to the table. Janet left them glaring at each other across the narrow expanse of the dinette, as if it were a No Man's land lined with the barbed wire of their hostility.

Anne Phillips walked home from work that afternoon. The building in which she lived was a three-storied brick structure with two flats to a floor. It had been built in the days before real estate men considered it imperative to utilize every available foot of ground for income purposes, and stood well back from the street with a neat lawn in front and a deep back yard. Each flat had a large front and back porch but there were no elevators or incinerators in the building.

"I know it dates me," Anne admitted to her friends, "but I'd rather climb stairs and run out to the alley with trash than to give up my old-fashioned big kitchen and my porch boxes."

Anne's flower boxes lined the railings on both porches of her flat and kept her busy nine months in the year. It was true she managed to have something in bloom from early spring to late fall, and she even grew radishes and lettuce and shallots in the box by the kitchen door.

Old Mr. Jacoby was sitting on the front stoop reading the afternoon paper when Anne came up the walk. He was seventy, a withered little old gentleman with a courtly manner. He "bached," as he expressed it, in two neat housekeeping rooms in the basement and looked after the

furnace in the winter and the lawn in the summer.

"Good evening, Miss Anne," he called out. "Warner today, ain't it? Ought to be fine for them Shasta daisies of yours."

Anne smiled. "And for your rheumatism."

"Nope," he said, "it's not so good. We can look for rain within twenty-four hours."

Anne chuckled. "I'll carry my umbrella tomorrow."

Mr. Jacoby claimed that his trick knee was an infallible barometer of weather conditions. Some of the younger generation in the building made fun of his prognostications, but not Anne. She could never forget the daze she had been in when she moved her fatherless little brood into the flat, a daze in which nothing seemed real to her except that raw new grave where she had buried her careless youth.

It was Mr. Jacoby who brought up a huge bowl of hot soup which he had made himself, ignoring with fine courtesy the tears which slid down Anne's wan cheeks as she sat there at the kitchen table in her new widow's weeds, Janet on her lap, Berenice clinging to her arm, Jim trying to be manly though he was only ten.

"Don't worry about the future," said Mr. Jacoby then. "God will give you strength to meet each day as it comes."

It was trite counsel, and this intellectual age is disposed to jeer at such simple faith as Mr. Jacoby's, yet it had comforted Anne Phillips. It still comforted her.

She was smiling when she climbed the stairs to the second floor and unlocked her door.

"Anybody home?" she called out, her usual greeting.

"Just me," came Janet's clear young voice from the farthest regions of the flat.

"Hello, dearest," Anne murmured, reaching for the apron she kept hanging on the pantry door to slip over the smart black crepe dress which she wore to the store.

"Hello, Mums," said Janet. "Come on out and cool off. Supper's ready except the tea, and there's no use cracking the ice till Jim comes. I was going out after him but he telephoned that he'd drive in with Ruth."

Janet was lying back in one of the canvas deck chairs which the family moved about from porch to porch as desired, stretched out full length, her arm flung up above her head so that her face was in the shadow. There was dejection in the listless manner in which her long straight limbs were disposed. Anne Phillips felt the dawn of uneasiness. It was unlike Janet to droop.

"Tired?" asked Anne, trying not to sound like the overanxious mother who nags her children to exasperation by an excess of solicitude.

"A little," admitted Janet. Her mother waited with that uneasy spot inside her steadily growing but, whatever troubled her child, she was not ready to discuss it.

"Have a hard day?" asked Janet.

"No more than usual," said Anne and laughed. "Mrs. Henry Leigh was in looking for a dinner dress. I turned the stock over for her, but nothing suited."

"It makes me sick, your having to grin and bear people like that!" cried Janet. "It would be different if you weren't a hundred times more refined than Priscilla Leigh or her mother will ever be!"

Anne flung her daughter a startled glance. "I don't mind being patronized by Jennie Leigh, Janet. I knew her when she lived with her folks back of their meat market and thought it polite to pass the toothpicks to company. Not that she doesn't

deserve worlds of credit for the way she toned down her rough edges after she married Henry. Only she knows I know about them and that's why she can't keep from trying to impress me with the fact that I may have been born to the purple, but it's she who's wearing it now, tra la."

Janet winced. "And I used to think that breeding and what counts," she remarked bitterly.

"They are," said her mother.

"Oh, no, they're not," protested Janet. "No one cares how vulgar you are inside if you can afford to go to expensive schools and run with a fashionable crowd. Priscilla Leigh would doublecross her best friend, but she will be the most popular deb

this season because her dad gives her hobs of spending money."

"I think," said Anne slowly, "that Henry is generous with his children about money because it's all he has to give them."

"You could have married him, couldn't you?"

Anne smiled. "He left that impression."

"But you preferred a struggling young physician."

Anne's freshly colored face sobered. Janet was more like her mother than either of the other children. Both she and Anne had firm cleft chins and lustrous dark hair. Anne was as slender as her daughter, and unless very tired she looked much too young to have a son of twenty-four.

"Yes," she said, "I distinctly

preferred your father. You see, although Henry was well on his way to his first hundred thousand at that time, he was anything except a romantic suitor." She laughed softly. "I can't tell you what a relief it was when you father and I announced our engagement and Henry abandoned the pursuit."

"And then Mrs. Leigh caught him on the rebound?"

"More or less."

"She was his stenographer, wasn't she?"

"She was very pretty in those days," said Anne evasively. "Quite as gorgeously blond as Priscilla."

"And how she has got on!"

(Continued Next Week)



Announcement

In accordance with the law, I have filed my name as a candidate for the House of Representatives from Surry County. I wish to express my thanks to those many friends all over the county who have asked me to place my name before the voters of Surry County.

If nominated and elected, I expect to serve, to the best of my ability, all of the people of this county. I was born and raised on a Surry County farm, an interest in which I still own and operate. I have spent my whole life in Surry County. Through training and experience I feel that I know the problems of the County and State.

I pledge my best efforts to the upbuilding of Surry County, and the State of North Carolina. My record at Raleigh, where I have served two terms, is an open one. My fellow workers in business, and my neighbors at home, are my best references. I know that Surry County is moving forward in farming, business and education. I am proud of our County, and pledge my whole efforts to advancement. Your problems are my problems; I feel that the hard working, serious minded men and women of the County will be with me.

HENRY C. DOBSON

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Hotpoint's feature-length movie dramatizing the trials and problems of a swing songstress who turns housewife. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll thrill at the human struggles which may be yours. See "BLAME IT ON LOVE" starring JOAN MARSH and JOHN KING.

Thursday, April 25
LYRIC THEATRE
9:45 A. M.

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Broadway's long-run stage success becomes the film triumph of the year.
starring SYLVIA SIDNEY and JOEL McCREA
with HUMPHREY BOGART • Released thru United Artists

And the Original "Dead End" Kids
Mickey Mouse Cartoon - News — Admission 10c-25c

Friday-Saturday, Matinee and Night—
THREE MESQUITEERS
—in—
"HEROES OF THE SADDLE"
Serial - Comedy - Disney Cartoon — Admission 10c-25c

Monday-Tuesday, Matinee Monday—

HER FIRST KISS Transforms the Tomboy Into a Woman...
...opens a world to the girl from the wrong side of town that she never dared dream could be hers!

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PRIMROSE PATH
with MARJORIE RAMBEAU • HENRY TRAVERS • MILLS MANDER
Queenie Smith • Joan Carroll
Produced and directed by GREGORY LA CAVA
Screen Play by Allan Scott and Gregory LaCava

Added: March of Time—"Finland" — Admission 10c-25c

Wednesday, Matinee and Night—
"CRASHING THROUGH"
With James Newill
Color Cartoon - Serial — Admission 10c to All