

"My Best Girl"

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

SEVENTH INSTALMENT

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"God help me, it's that way with me, Joe," she whispered, not meeting his eyes.

They walked back to the store in absolute silence.

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The last named was included in the party merely because he happened to be in the house, with no dinner engagement and because a wild rain was falling. George Merrill cared no longer whether his son and heir came or went.

Yet he had blindly idolized his son.

That young Joe had shown a laudable indifference to society, and had flunked in college, after disposing of a small fortune in various little if not actually harmful ways, had been a bitter blow to the father's honest, hard-working pride.

Since, however, he was actually giving, they had begun, for the first time in his twenty years, to permit him to their disgust and disappointment to find his own level.

So that on the particular evening, upon seeing three places set at the family board, his father, scowlingly interrogating the waiter, merely shrugged when the answer was that the third place was for Mr. Joseph.

"Oh, he don't matter!" said George Merrill. "We want to talk business. But Mr. Joe's all right. He won't hear a word we say."

"I want he would," Frank Flint, a big, rosy, silver-headed man, said loftily. "We want that boy in the business, some day."

Mr. Merrill responded simply: "Frank, I don't know what he's doing, or what he wants to do! They're too much for me nowadays. He's busy about something, it won't last. But while it keeps him out of mischief or out of jail—"

"It be glad enough to have him get interested in the Mack. If he seems to catch on to anything, it's right as we talk, Frank, see if you can draw him out."

"Sorry to be late," said Joe, at the point coming in.

"Write not late," his father assured him ingratiatingly. "Sometimes, in the course of the last few years, his nonattendance in the boy has been almost a great hazard."

But just at late, even since, in fact, that terrible scene when his mother had called him a "chameleon," with out one single wickedly insinuated in his mind to say, "and when he, his father had blamed at Joe that he was a better than a pickpocket, there had seemed to be a queer change in the boy.

"There, Joe?"

"I been garden?"

"Say you look teen, my boy. Re-search," said George Merrill, with a wink for his general manager.

"None. Yes, I am a little tired. Not much," Joe said, unsatisfactorily fiddling upon his soap.

Then Joe said mildly, in a pause: "You say that it's the rain that's the cause in the Mack Store—not the labor, I've thought of that. It seems to me that every day enough colors and writing paper are carried and toys and socks fall on the floor and are trampled to set up a separate branch."

"Where'd you get this, Joe?" asked his father.

"I went into—Number Seven. I think it is," said Joe.

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"That's Number Seven. Good for you! I hope you got service," said Flint.

"They have a great staff there," said Joe.

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store," Flint agreed.

"What returned to me," Joe said seriously, "was that you—well, I might say—could handle all that small stuff very much better than an automat."

"That's an idea, Joe, but unfortunately it's not practical," his father said calmly, comfortably.

Then his eye and the eye of his general manager met.

"Why isn't it practical, Frank? It looks all right on the face—they're opening those damn nickel-in-the-slot places all over town," George Merrill said. "They're practical."

"Well—" Frank Flint hesitated.

Joe broke in: "Take the whole back wall of a ten-cent store here. Let 'em drop pennies for their spools and soap and ink and pencils and can openers and hairpins. You could have a girl there to change their money."

"I'm not at all sure, Joe," said his father explosively. "I'm not at all sure that you haven't given us an idea."

"I could look into that, Mr. Merrill," Flint said. "It might—catch on, Mr. Merrill. It would be an exclusive Mack feature, you know."

"Frank, the more I think of that, the more I suspect that—there's something in it," George Merrill, drawing his words portentously, said slowly. "When could you set Burke?"

"See him tomorrow."

"Take that up with him, will you, Frank? Find out who makes that machinery. We might as well look into it anyway."

Joe wanted to keep that look in his father's eyes, that proud, vindicated look that said: "This boy of mine, isn't—such—a—damn—feet, after all!"

An hour later, he was reading in his room when his father came, rather shyly, rather awkwardly in. The boy had taken the trouble to come downstairs, Joe reflected, gratified.

"Joe, seen that girl who sings that 'Moose-trail' thing in the Revue?"

"Yes, Sir. Saw it opening night."

"I've got two seats," George Merrill displayed them deprecatingly. "I was going to take Flint," he said.

"I'd like to see that damned show again," Joe said.

Fifteen minutes later they left the house together. It was the first time Joe Merrill had gone to the theatre with his father since the day of his fourteenth birthday treat.

"I passed along that idea of yours, about having an automat for the notions, to one of the heads," Joe told Maggie. "I took the credit for it, but what made me feel rotten was that I didn't say that you had thought of it first."

"Oh, well, we sort of worked it out together, that day we were at the automat," she said, anxious to reassure him.

"Worked it out together nothing. You began it. It was entirely your idea."

"But what's the difference as long as one of us gets the credit?" she asked innocently.

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"How dare you speak to me! You ought to be ashamed to speak to me! I hate you!"

"For heaven's sake, what's the matter?" Joe stammered against.

But she went quickly, in a shabby little utility head and high, and disappeared in the crowd before he could catch her again.

Joe walked briskly toward his car, got into it, and drove toward Goat Hill.

"My gosh, I never saw her like that before! I wonder what the devil I've done!" he kept saying aloud as he went.

The dinner was at the club tonight; it was for pretty little Katrina Fairchild, Millicent, next to Joe, was heating powder into her rather coarse-pored, colorless skin with violent jerks of her elbow.

Everyone in the room was bitterly bored; guests, waiters, musicians. Millicent asked languidly:

Seriously Ill



Dame Nellie Melba, world-famous opera singer, reported dying at 64 at Melbourne, Australia. Born Helen Porter Mitchell, she took her stage name from Australia's great city.

Boone's Fast Development Depicted in Unique History

SECOND INSTALMENT

Following is the second instalment of a history of Boone, compiled by the primary department of Appalachian State Teachers College.

Early Inhabitants. Some of the early inhabitants of Boone were Thomas Hodges, who, during the Revolution, came from Virginia and settled two miles west of Boone in what is now known as Hodges Cove. Jordan Council lived on the old Jefferson road, at what was known as the Buck Horn Tree place. This tree has been cut down, but it is said to have stood in the yard of the A. E. Hamby home. Joan Norris came to Boone from Pennsylvania before the Revolution. He lived east of Boone on the Jefferson road.

First Buildings in Boone

The first public buildings in Boone were the courthouse which stood at the back of Mr. Lindey's residence. This was a two-story wooden building and the court was held downstairs, the upper floor being filled with offices. This courthouse was burned about 1873. Why the burning was always been a mystery, although it is believed that it was fired by two men who wished to destroy some papers which were held against them in the courthouse.

The first jail was built by a Mr. Dammous and stood in front of the Murray Critcher Hotel. This was a brick structure but the bricks were of poor quality and could easily be removed. After the building had been built but a few years Elisha Greene built another of white pine logs. A steel cage was used in it as a cell with iron bars crossing it. It also had a walkway around it which enabled people to walk around and gaze at the prisoners.

Another one of the early structures was a brick building which was used by The Watauga Democrat for many years. It stood where the present Democrat building stands. The first residence in Boone was that occupied by Jordan Council, which stood a few hundred yards from the Buck Horn Tree where Mr. Hamby now lives. It was built of logs with

only one room. Jordan Council Jr. built a home later occupied by R. C. Rivers.

Business Enterprises

Jordan Council Sr. and Jordan Council Jr. were among the first merchants of Boone. The store house used by Jordan Council Jr. stood west of his residence and between the office building erected by Dr. W. R. Council and the road. The storehouse was afterward moved across the road, where the residence of David Greene now stands. What is now the town of Boone was for years known as Council's Store and as early as 1835 a postoffice was in existence. Merchandise at the time was brought in by covered wagons drawn by four or six horses. Roads were very poor. A trip to Charleston, S. C., where some of the goods were bought, took six weeks to make. Sheriff Jack Horton had a store house which stood on the present courthouse lot, fronting what is now the Blackburn Hotel. In this store Horton sold goods and whatever merchandise was in demand and kept a sort of bar and saddle shop. James H. Tatum, of Fredell County came soon after Boone was established and built a store on the lot now occupied by the residence of W. L. Bryan. Tatum worked in the store there several years and then rented it to Joseph C. Council who

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Influenza Spreading

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PINKY DINKY : : : : : By Terry Gilkison

HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOIN', PINKY?

I'M GOIN' HOME! MOM IS GOIN' TO GIVE ME A LICKING!

GEE! WHAT ARE YOU IN SUCH A HURRY FOR, EH?

BECAUSE—IF I DON'T GET HOME SOON—DAD WILL BE IN AND HE'LL DO IT!

PINKY DINKY SINGLES

THE BOY STOOD ON THE BURNING DECK, A TEST OF GREAT ENDURANCE AND WHEN THE BLAZING BARK WENT DOWN HIS DAD GOT THE INSURANCE

TERRY GILKISON