

The Dollar Bride

by Mary Inlay Taylor
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18TH INSTALLMENT

"Nancy Virginia," he said solemnly, "we love you and we know it isn't true. But there's a story about you; to fight it, to put it down, we've got to know the whole truth. Will you trust an old man? Will you tell me?"

Nancy seemed to grow limp. "What is the story, major?" she asked.

He told her. "I'm an old man, child, forgive me—Angie wouldn't repeat it. I had to. You've got to tell me the truth so I can put it down."

She opened her lips with an effort. "I can't!" she said in a smothered voice.

The old man stood staring in grave surprise.

"I can't say anything," she said brokenly, "I—a woman can't save herself—I can't tell you, major—I can't!"

"Then Morgan must!" said the major.

"Oh, no, no! Not that—never that!" she wailed, clinging to his arm, "promise me—never that!"

She had only one horrible thought. Richard had cast her out and left her to this. She would not appeal to him again.

Major Lomax drew her hand through his arm; he said nothing more. He led her, against her will, up to his own house and opened the door.

"Angie!" he shouted, "Angie—Nancy is here to see you—keep her all night. I'll phone to her mother."

But before his telephone message reached the Gordons something had happened there which wiped out its significance. Mr. Gordon was away; he had gone to Richmond on business for the bank, and would scarcely be back for two or three days. Only Mrs. Gordon and Amanda were at home. Mrs. Gordon was busy.

she was startled by Amanda's voice at the door.

"Mis' Gordon!" she called excitedly.

"Mis' Gordon, heah come Mist' Roddy, yes m'm sho's yo'se born—Mist' Roddy hisse'f!"

With a little cry of rapture, Mrs. Gordon ran to the door.

"Roddy!"

He stared at her, his arms hanging limp, and when she embraced him he lurched away from her.

"Where—whersh father?" he asked thickly.

"He's in Richmond, dear," she caught at his arm, looking up into his face. "Why, Roddy, you're ill, your eyes are all bloodshot—take off your hat, dear!"

He laughed foolishly, starting away from her again and catching at the door-post for support.

"Whatsh th' matter with my hat?" he demanded, taking it off and smiling at it idiotically, "nice old peach of a hat—" he spun it around on one finger, giggling suddenly. Then he began to sing loudly.

"Where did you get that hatsh?"

"Where did you get that hatsh?"

"Roddy!" his mother gave a little cry of horror; she seized his arm and shook him. "Look at me, Roddy, don't you know me? It's mother!"

Roddy looked at her, his eyes still vacant and watery. Then he laughed wildly, keeping his feet with a lurch, and chuckled her under the chin.

"Th' owl ish a baker's daughter!" he gurgled, reeled, lost his balance and sat down suddenly and heavily on the floor.

Mrs. Gordon uttered a sharp cry of horror and dismay, and ran to the kitchen door.

"Mandy!" she cried, "Mandy—come quick. I—I think Mr. Roddy's gone crazy."

Amanda came pulling down her sleeves. Roddy was still sitting on the floor, his feet spread out in front of him, and he was ogling them and laughing foolishly. His face was sickly and pale, and the long lock of his hair hung down between the glassy eyes.

"Hello, Mandy!" he said, still thickly, "hello! Where dish you get two heads? Haven't any business to have two heads, mus'n get drunk—they'll arres' you! Man on th' car had two heads, didn't know where he'd got 'em either—must have been drunk—thass aw'f'!"

But poor Mrs. Gordon was wringing her hands. "He's crazy!" she sobbed, "Mandy, he's crazy—they've worked my boy to death in New York."

Amanda said nothing; she seized Roddy suddenly by the arm and propelled him toward the lounge.

"Yo'-all lie down," she said soothingly, "yo' lie righ' down honey, Mandy'll git yo' a cup of coffee, yessuh, yo' lie down."

Roddy yielded to her propelling touch partly because he could not

keep his feet. He dropped violently upon the lounge, rolled over and lay face downward.

His mother caught hold of Amanda with shaking hands.

"Don't trust to the telephone," she sobbed, "I can't talk over it now myself—you run to Dr.



"I can't say anything," she said brokenly—"I can't tell you major."

Morgan, Mandy, run! Tell him what's happened. Tell him my poor boy's lost his mind. Bring him, don't let him walk—it'll be his office-hours—it doesn't matter—bring him quick—quick!"

Amanda, running across the garden with her apron over her head, gave way once to laughter, and once she knuckled tears from her eyes.

"Fo' de Lawd, his mother ain't gwinter believe it—if de doctah tells her!"

Then she saw Mammy Polk weeping the back porch and slowed to a walk.

"I ain't gwinter let on ter dat ole imp ob Satan!" she mumbled to herself, "she's too big fish nigger anyways—I reckon my folks' a reap betah den hern. Mis' Polk," she said aloud, with dignity, "where's de doctah at?"

Richard had just dismissed a patient and was standing by his desk, looking tall and thin in his white office coat. He thought it was Mammy Polk and did not look up until Amanda coughed. For an instant he did not recognize her, and when he did, his face hardened in spite of himself.

"What is it Amanda?"

She courtesied, folding her hands into her apron. "Mis' Gordon sen' ne fo' yo'-all, suh. She sez Mis' Roddy done gone plumb crazy, yessuh, an' she wants yo' to come quick."

Richard frowned. "Crazy? Roddy? What do you mean Amanda?"

Amanda edged closer, pleading her apron demurely; then she looked up sideways and gave him a wink—as one man of the world to another.

"He ain't crazy, no suh, he's jes' drunk, but his ma's takin' on an' his pa ain't home—I reckon it's jes' as well anyways, Mis' Gordon ain't gwinter stand no foolin', no suh!"

Roddy drunk! Richard could not remember that the boy had ever had the failing of drink. A thief and a drunkard. Unconsciously the shock it penetrated even the iron of his reserve.

"You go ahead, Amanda. I'll follow," he said, as they left the house together.

Mrs. Gordon had been on her knees beside him, but she stumbled to her feet as Morgan entered.

Richard took her shaking hands in both his. "Don't be frightened," he said gently.

"Ain't frightened," said Roddy thickly, "dry—thass it, dry as dust—an' she's got water—water—" he began to sing, rocking to and fro.

Mrs. Gordon tore her hand out of Richard's and covered her face sobbing. "My boy's crazy," she said in a whisper, "I can't bear it—can't!"

Richard drew her gently out into the hall.

"He's not crazy, Mrs. Gordon," he said kindly, "someone has given him some kind of strong drink—and it's gone to his head, that's all."

She gazed at him horrified, incredulous. "My boy naver drank!"

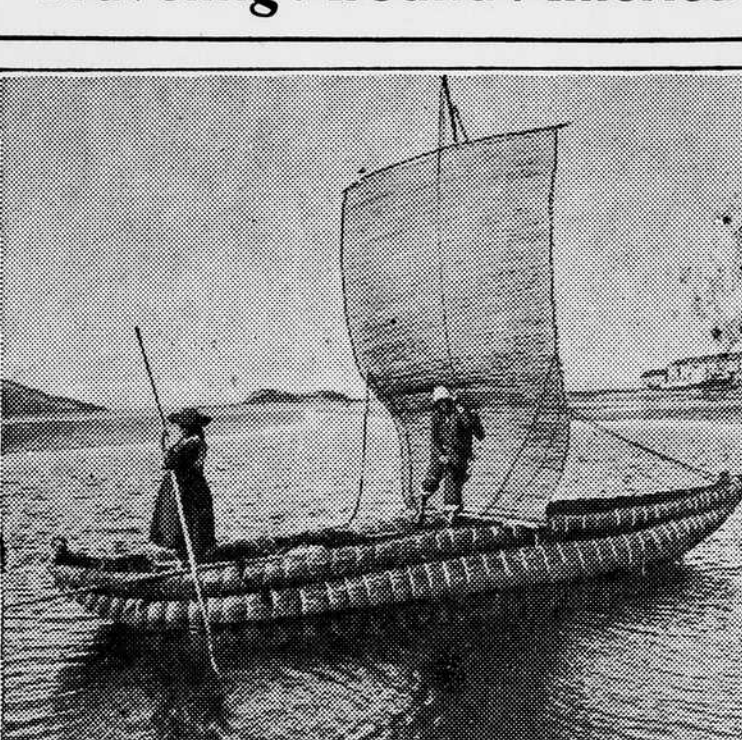
"I know it—that's why it's affected him so badly. He'll get over it. Don't worry." Richard was sorry for her.

She turned very white. "His father!" she gasped in a frightened whisper.

"Mrs. Gordon, I'm going to take him home. My car's outside my own door, I'll get it. Nobody need know, not even your husband. He'll be all right tomorrow."

Without another word, Richard went out. But when he drove his

Traveling Around America



ON TOP OF THE WORLD Photo Grace Line

THIS little balsa is riding the waves on top of the world. It is one of the strange sailboats which the Indians use for fishing and transportation on Lake Titicaca, South America—the highest navigable lake in the world, lying 13,500 feet above sea level between two chains of mountains, the loftiest of which are almost 20,000 feet high. The Indians, by an ingenious method handed down through the centuries build their balsas by binding together the reeds and rushes found along the shore and fashioning them into a canoe-shaped craft topped by a graceful reed sail. These boats are exactly like those in which the Incas sailed across the lake to the sacred island of the Sun in the days when its streets flashed with silver and its temple and palace glittered with gold and precious stones.

As a concession to modern times a sturdy steamer, the Inca—more than 200 feet long and very comfortable now piles between Puno the Peruvian port, and Guacui, the Bolivian terminal. Since Lake Titicaca has no outlet to the sea the steamer Inca brought there in 1902 and her predecessor, the Yavari, built in 1861, were transported up to the Lake in sections—the Inca by rail and the Yavari by mule and Indian pack.

The 12-hour steamer trip is one of the most enjoyable treats South America offers travelers taking the weekly cruises from New York and California to Peru and Chile. During the crossing, emerald islets flecked with ruins thousands of years old float by; ancient Inca straits drift in from shore as the Indians play their pipes-of-pan; and a procession, 95 miles long, of magnificent mountains topped with snow and wound round with llama trails passes in view.

car around to the Gordon's back door, Roddy, whose condition seemed to get worse all the time, had to be coaxed into it. Richard and Amanda managed it.

Richard drove the car straight into his garage. By that time Roddy had sagged over and gone to sleep. Richard called to his man.

"Sam! Here—you go up and tell Mammy Polk she can visit her cousin tonight. Send her packing. Then you come back here and help me get this boy into the house and into bed."

Sam went, and half an hour later, Roddy Gordon was asleep in the room next to Richard's. He slept heavily at first, but toward midnight, he became violently ill and Richard fought a hard battle with a touch of delirium in it.

"Must have been soaking himself and got some wood alcohol, too," Richard thought, sitting up.

At two o'clock in the morning, Roddy was really ill; it took all Richard's time and skill to turn the tide in his favor.

It was five o'clock now and broad day. Richard went downstairs and made some strong coffee. When he went back to his patient, Roddy was awake and terribly sober. He choked down the hot coffee and wanted to kill himself.

"How did I get here?" he asked blankly.

Richard told him, feeling his pulse. "You're better. Keep quiet old man. No one knows but your other."

"My mother?" Roddy groaned turning his face to the wall.

Richard quieted him. He was using almost all his power as a doctor and an older man to keep him quiet when old Sam called him from the stairs.

"Somebody down heah, Mist' Richard!"

In the hall stood Nancy. She was bareheaded and she still wore the frock in which she had gone to the Lomaxes.

"Richard, where's Roddy? I must see my brother!"

Then, as he hesitated, she broke out angrily.

"He hasn't diptheria! Mama told me—I must see him, I've got a right to see him—where is he?"

Richard turned to the stairs. "He's up here—he's sober. You may see him."

That was all; he did not even look at her as he led the way upstairs.

At the door of Roddy's room Richard stepped back for Nancy to enter. The girl stood still an instant, her hand pressed against her breast.

"Don't let Roddy frighten you," Richard managed stiffly, his voice sounding harsh. "He's been under the influence of too much liquor. He's come out of it with a headache and the blue devils. Don't let it frighten you."

Nancy's head went up; she thought he felt that they heaped their troubles on him—she and her brother.

Richard opened the door and she went in. She heard him close it

State Game Warden Points The Way To Better Fishing

Better sport fishing would be brought within reach of every North Carolina angler, if John D. Chalk, newly appointed game and inland fisheries commissioner, is successful in prosecuting the program upon which he is working.

With the hunting seasons over until fall, Mr. Chalk is centering his attention on fishing activities. Finding the source of support of the inland fisheries program, the collection of license fees, lagging the commissioner has instructed wardens throughout the State to renew their efforts along this line. Funds from this source are the sole dependence of the hatcheries for operation and support of all activities for the protection and improvement of sport fishing. The license fee is described as the anglers' investment in his sport.

Licenses are required of all persons fishing in counties other than those in which they reside and non-residents. This fee, in the case of residents amounts to \$2.10. In addition, county licenses are required of all persons fishing in about a score of the counties in the State. During the last few weeks a sharp increase in collections has been reported.

Although the regular closed season for fishing for warm water species is now in effect, the dates being May 1 to June 11, some form of angling is permitted for certain days in each week during this period in all counties. Fishing is permitted on specified days in counties having only warm water fishing during the May 1—June 11 period, and the trout season is under way in Western North Carolina.

One phase of the inland fisheries program which the new commissioner is planning to stress is the construction of fish ponds on every farm in the State where facilities are available. Each new pond, it is pointed out, will provide new opportunities for fishing and other recreation and will afford an opportunity, if proper cultural methods are followed, for a continuous supply of appetizing and wholesome food.

The U. S. Bureau of Fisheries has long pointed out the advantages of pondfish culture, and the State conservation department has joined heartily in this movement by frequently calling the attention of the public to the desirability of providing new fishing grounds.

Poisoned Wife, 7 Children, He Says

Sapulpa, Okla.—County authorities held the signed confession of Chester Barrett, thirty-two-year-old unemployed painter, that he poisoned his wife and seven of his eight children to prevent their starving. Three children died.

"I just thought that if we could all go to sleep and never wake up God would forgive me," read the statement of Barrett, who is held on a charge of murder.

The fatal doses were administered in the guise of medicine after Barrett had made two unsuccessful attempts to kill his family and commit suicide, the confession said.

Chased Runaway Train Ten Miles to Avert Disaster

Story of heroic action of a railroad crew told in a thrilling article in the American Weekly, the magazine which comes with the BALTIMORE SUNDAY AMERICAN, issue of May 13.

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Boy 5, Victim Of Rare Malady

San Francisco — Five-year-old Eugene Bennett of Jackson was a patient at Children's Hospital here and doctors tried to find a cure for his strange malady, which causes his skin to react like a photographic film to the sun's rays. Exposure to the sun causes Eugene's skin to break out in deep blisters. The rare disease is known as hydro aestivale.

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