



Lightly

by MARGARET E. SANGSTER

SECOND INSTALLMENT

"Your father was away when I made my discovery. He'd been away for several weeks on something that he called a 'big deal.' I was expecting him home the very night that I saw the doctor, and I planned to tell him all about you, at once. So I sat in the garden and waited for him, and watched for his train. And finally I saw it—the train that should have brought him to me—sweep across the valley below the house. I saw it stop at the station, and I saw it go on again. And I waited, with my soul full of the news I had to tell—I waited to give him the tidings of his son (for I thought, darling, that you were going to be a boy!) but he didn't come, although I waited all of that night. . . . And the next day, when I got the message that told me he wasn't coming back, ever, I went upstairs, and into my room and locked the door. And I sat down and began to knit a blue sweater for you. And I whistled, hard, as I knitted. I haven't whistled since—and I certainly never whistled before, Ellen! That's why, I guess, you were a girl. . . . A boy wouldn't have had any use for a mother who whistled so badly. . . . A boy—"

All at once Ellen's mother had stopped talking. Her voice had dwindled away into a funny, tragic silence. And Ellen saw her face go oddly white, felt her hand go chill and limp.

It was then that Ellen, starting to her feet, saw her mother's head sag forward.

"I'm going for the doctor," she half sobbed. "Your chest. . . . Is it your heart, darling? Is it—"

Ellen's mother had rallied. Her smile was less wan than it had been.

"My heart?" questioned Ellen's mother. "Oh—nonsense! Indigestion, no doubt. Something like that even then she managed a trifle of gayety, something I ate as a child, no doubt! I'm quite well, now. . . ."

It didn't occur to Ellen in the weeks that passed, to ask her mother for the details of what had happened to her father. In her mind she had a vivid impression of some major calamity—of a train wreck or an automobile disaster. Only a calamity could have kept her father from her mother at such a time, she was sure!

And then, perhaps a month later, the special delivery letter arrived. It was the boy from the post-office who brought the letter. Because her mother was at work she had signed for it, and dismissed the boy, before she spoke to the woman who painted so absently.

"It's a letter," she said, "a special delivery for you. I guess it's about the drawing you sent away last week. We were expecting some word."

With a start her mother came back from the land of her own creation, to reality. With listless hands she took the envelope from her daughter, and slit it open. Ellen watched her mother idly—so idly that at first she could scarcely believe what her eyes were seeing! For, as she stood watching, she saw her mother change completely and dreadfully. More dreadfully than she had changed on that other day, weeks before. In a minute she saw a broken, shriveled, parchment-cheeked figure.

"You're ill!" Ellen cried, as she started forward. "Was there bad news in the letter? You're upset—"

But when the answer came it wasn't an answer. For Ellen's mother, her hand again pressed to her breast, was rising. And as she rose to her feet, she was looking beyond Ellen. She swayed slightly—and then as if she couldn't help it, she sat down again. But her voice was steady, though toneless, when she spoke.

"It's that indigestion, I guess," she said, gaspingly. And then—"Bring me my check book, dear."

Ellen didn't speak. She sensed a desperation in that toneless voice, a need of hurry. Turning, she ran into the house, scampered to the desk where the check book lay. She brought it, and a fountain pen and stationery, to her mother, and watched as her mother's shaking hand wrote a check—wrote it to what, in Ellen's knowledge of the family finances, was an alarming amount. It was only after the check was carefully made out to a strange name, and as carefully blotted that the woman spoke again.

"Ellen," she said, "dear. Get your



"I'm going for the doctor," she half sobbed, "Your chest. . . . Is it your heart, darling?"

hat and take this at once, to the post-office in the village. And send it special delivery, and register it."

Ellen, even in the face of her mother's tragic hurry, couldn't quite grasp the seriousness of the letter. Her mother's sudden illness seemed so much more important. "Too bad I didn't ask the boy to wait," she said. "He could just as well have taken a letter back."

"I couldn't," said her mother with a great effort, "have trusted it to anyone else, this letter! You'd have had to take it, anyway. . . . And I'm glad—remember that, always, Ellen!—that it is just about all the money I have. I'm utterly grateful that there was enough. And—I don't want a doctor. I'm not ill. I'm never ill. . . ."

She rose again. She turned heavily away, toward the house. And Ellen, with no other word, but clutching the envelope, went out of the garden and started toward. She walked so fast that she

didn't have time to wonder about anything. But she reached the post office with a good margin of minutes, and followed her mother's instructions soberly, and started back home.

The way back led past the doctor's square white house. He wasn't in. But she left a message with the doctor's aged housekeeper—who eyed her with a frank curiosity—and hurried on.

"Mother'll be cross," she told herself, as she scuffed her feet along in the dust of the road—"because I've asked the doctor to stop by. But she can't go on, having these funny spells! I wonder who the letter was from?"

The letter. Ellen couldn't help being curious about it—couldn't help feeling that it held the elements of mystery. It didn't, of that she was sure, relate to business, for what business dealings could have to do with such a large check? It must be something strange and ominous. It might almost go back, across the years, to her father. And yet. . . .

The house lay in the last light of the setting sun, it was her world. Its four walls bounded all of her life, and her childhood, and her fragile store of experience. It was her home—surrounded by her garden.

Down the path she went, with its border of fading beauty, in through the wide opened door. In the hallway she paused for a moment before a dim mirror and automatically fluffed her hair. Suddenly, without knowing why she did it, she was calling wildly, was running toward the stairs. Screaming—"Mother! Mother darling! Where are you? Where are you—"

There was no answer, only a



The house lay in the last light of the setting sun, it was her world.

whispered echo from quiet rooms. Ellen with the cold fingers of dread touching her heart, found herself running up the flight of stairs that led to the second floor.

Ellen knocked, not too softly, upon the panel of her mother's door. And then when she heard no sound from within, she jerked the door open and paused, panting, upon the threshold.

At first as she stood there, she knew a great sense of relief. It was as she had supposed—her mother was lying on the bed, resting! As she tiptoed across the room, Ellen thought that her mother was really asleep. For her lips were smiling very beautifully, with their old magic; and her eyes were softly closed—it was as if, in truth, she were the sleeping beauty.

At first Ellen thought her mother was asleep. And then suddenly she knew completely and utterly, and with an overwhelming sense of loneliness, that her mother was not sleeping!

Perhaps it was something in the sweetness of her mother's smile. Perhaps it was something in the chill magic of the room. But Ellen knew surely. . . . And yet, knowing, she did not touch that still figure, and neither did she cry out. Instead she walked very close to the bed. And as she came close, she saw that her mother's fingers held a letter, ever so slightly crumpled. It was the letter that had come only the space of a few hours ago.

Ellen, scarcely knowing what she did, reached over and took the letter from her mother's hand. She smoothed out its wrinkles very methodically, and read.

And then, suddenly, she was lying on the floor, beside her mother's bed, sobbing out all of her heartache and her disillusionment and her pain.

For the letter, written with brutal frankness, in an untaught hand, was from a woman. A woman who told of a man's death in a cheap lodging house, in another state. "Toward the last," wrote the woman, "he spoke of you, often. But still and all, there wasn't any reason why he should have seen you! He'd stopped loving you—and he did love me. Maybe he thought

you were well to do—and, at the end, he hadn't anything. And after all, you were his wife, for there was never any divorce. And now that there's no money for funeral expenses—well, of course, if you want charity to bury him. . . . But a grave and a marker and all the rest—" here she named a sum of money, a sum that Ellen had seen her mother write upon a check.

"I don't suppose, though," the letter ended, "that it matters much now. Only he was sort of proud always. . . ."

Ellen, sobbing, understood at last.

But Ellen was never to know the details of her father's final degeneration, or of his death, or of his burial. All that she ever knew was that the last check her mother had written was returned, duly endorsed by some distant firm of undertakers, to the bank.

She never knew the final chapter of her mother's tragic story! But she did know, at last, why her mother had crept away from the city, from people—why she had tried to shield her only child from cities, and from people.

The darkness, creeping ghostlike into a room of sadness and death and despair, brought with it a swift memory of the garden, the garden as it had been a month before.

Through that darkness Ellen could hear the approaching rumble of the doctor's Ford. But she was aware of it subjectively. The only actual sound that she heard was the echo of her mother's voice, speaking. Saying—

"Love lightly. Don't get intense about love. Don't give anything. . . . Take everything, but don't—"

Oh, it had been a magnificent lie! Ellen's hand, wet with her own tears, reached up to touch her mother's chill fingers that had been clenched upon a cruel letter.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

OUR CHILD AND THE SCHOOL

By Dr. ALLEN G. IRELAND
Director, Physical and Health Education
New Jersey State Department of Public Instruction

Learning at Luncheon

No one really expects children to have a knowledge of their nutritional needs, or calories, vitamins and the like. . . . If left to themselves with an opportunity to choose, they would eat chiefly of those things that "taste good." Hence, a problem faces parents and teachers alike, for, when such

important information is available we can't just let it accumulate and lay idle. It is too significant to health and success and happiness. It must be put to work in the lives of people.

But the majority of parents either do not have scientific knowledge of foods and nutrition or they don't know how best to teach children. Thus the responsibility falls to the educational institution of the community which these same parents support and to the staff of teachers who understand how to make knowledge function in the lives of children.

It is in this light that the school lunch is taking form. Instead of being just a convenience for those who can't go home at noon, it is coming to be regarded as a learning situation. It is a laboratory where one of the chief essentials of life is practiced in a correct manner until habits and attitudes are formed. Parents say that a good school lunch situation influences food selection and table manners at home. Principals say it makes for better school morale. And the pupils approve because they like it.

What about home work? Dr. Ireland will discuss it next week.

It is claimed there are 6,000,000 children with defective vision, but anyway they can see all the fruit trees.

People are warned against the danger of falling down stairs, but falling off the water wagon often produces more lasting injuries.

Black-Draught For Dizziness, Headache Due To Constipation

"I have used Theford's Black-Draught several years and find it splendid," writes Mr. G. W. HOLLEY, of St. Paul, Va. "I take it for dizziness or headache (due to constipation). I have never found anything better. A short while ago, we began giving our children Syrup of Black-Draught as a laxative for colds and little stomach ailments, and have found it very satisfactory. . . . Millions of packages of Theford's Black-Draught are required to satisfy the demand for this popular, old reliable, purely vegetable laxative. 25¢ a package. "Children like the Syrup."

Democrats Shift Drive Into High This Week

Imposing Array Of Speeches Slated To Appear At Points All Over The State

An imposing array of Democratic men and women has been lined up to carry the party fight into many sections of North Carolina next week as full-steam ahead was called for by Chairman J. Wallace Winborne, in charge of the campaign leading up to the November 6 election.

Governor Ehringhaus, Robert L.

Doughton, Senator J. W. Bailey, Clyde R. Hoey, Congressman Harold D. Cooley, Congressman Walter Lambeth and others will be making speeches almost every day this week while one or more speaking dates are listed for J. Frank Spruill of Lexington, Lieut. Gov. A. H. Graham of Hillsboro, Congressman William B. Umstead, Maj. L. P. McLendon of Greensboro, Charles Ross of Raleigh and Phil C. Cocke of Asheville.

Motorists complain that they have to watch the road all the time, but some find their attention wholly occupied by the girl on the front seat.

DO NOT GET EXCITED

A fascinating story revealing remarkable experiments of a famous Russian psychologist, which lead him to conclude that a conflict exists between our nerves and our brains. One of many interesting illustrated articles in the American Weekly (issue of October 28), the magazine which comes each week with the BALTIMORE SUNDAY AMERICAN. Buy your copy from your favorite newsdealer or newsboy.

The game isn't in much danger from some hunters now going out, but not so much can be said for the friends who accompany them.

Heat with Coke . . . the clean efficient fuel



"GOODNESS . . . YOU LET THE HALL LIGHT BURN ALL NIGHT!"

1c —that's all it costs the average customer to burn a 25-watt lamp for 12½ hours. So suppose you DID forget the hall light?

That penny saved the possibility of stubbed toes, barked shins, and maybe a nasty tumble over Junior's unparked toys. And did you ever hear of a night prowler that failed to give a lighted home a wide berth?

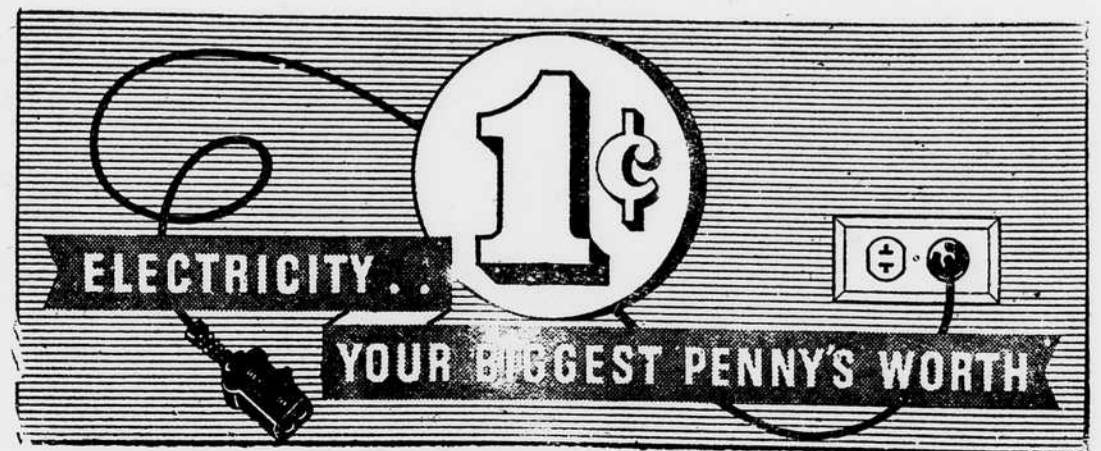
One cent! It may not buy much in other ways. You need several of them for a newspaper or to post an out-of-town letter or for a package of chewing gum.

But—because electricity is so cheap—ONE CENT SPENT ELECTRICALLY BUYS HOURS OF SERVICE! One cent, for instance, will—

furnish reading light with a 75-watt bulb more than four hours . . . or . . . spot-light your face with a 25-watt bulb for more than a month of shaves . . . or . . . brighten the card table with an indirect lamp for several rubbers of bridge.

1c Keeps A 25-Watt Lamp Lighted From Dusk To Dawn (12½ Hours)

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