



Lightly
by MARGARET E. SANGSTER

THIRD INSTALMENT

"And so," said Ellen, "little Goldilocks come to the big city. Or perhaps I should say Little Red Riding Hood. As I remember it, I did wear a red beret! With just exactly twenty dollars in the pocket of the old tweed coat—but with all of my bills paid, and the homestead still unmortgaged. You didn't know, did you, that I am a landowner? That I, whose knees shall be known to posterity, am the possessor of an estate!"

The man with the Vandylke beard reached, through the cloud of his pipe smoke, for her hand—which Ellen carefully removed from his vicinity. He shrugged, and reached instead for the glass that stood at his elbow.

"For such a red hot, red capped little person," he said "you're startlingly chill! Know that, Ellen? A," he laughed, quite alone, at his pun, "a Church—and why should a church need fortifications?—with battlements and moats and a draw-bridge!"

One of the two other girls was speaking.

"Shut up, Sandy," she said. "You're just about as funny as a wack! Say, Ellen," her voice was shrill, "why don't you throw a party up at your place, some weekend? The crowd of us could make perfectly swell whoopee."

If a shadow crept across the carefully rouged little face of Ellen Church, she veiled that shadow with a slim, raised hand. Her answer came with almost too much

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nonchalance.

"I haven't been near the place," she said, "since I turned the key in the lock and went out into the storm, with neither a wedding ring nor a baby. I'd have to have considerable of a weekend—and I mean my head!—to take you all up there. Why," even at twenty Ellen could not quite control the sudden tremor in her voice, "Why, the place is full of ghosts. . . ."

The man with the Vandylke beard puffed away in silence for a moment.

"You were telling your life story," he reminded Ellen, at last. "Not that it's such a whale of a story, at that. There hasn't been a starvation, or a temptation, or a ruination, yet."

"And," the tremor had quite gone from Ellen's voice, "there won't be, either. Not while the old brain sits firmly just above the well known shoulders. Well, to make a short story long, I got in touch with the only soul I knew, believe it or not, in New York. A person who had sold my mother's work. Sort of an art agent, you understand. Mother—she did all of her selling second hand, she wouldn't see art editors herself. You have to be pretty swell, there was a note of pride, a defensive sort of pride, in Ellen's voice, "to sell your stuff that way! But anyhow," the pride was gone from her voice, now, "anyhow, I went to this agent and asked her advice. And she tried to help. Perhaps you'd better be an artist," she said. "It's in your blood. But it's left out of my fingers," I told her. "Well, what can you do?" she asked me. And I said, "I'm a regular wow at posing."

A man without a beard and for that reason some years older than the Vandylke one, spoke.

"And so you are!" he told Ellen. "I never knew anyone who could catch an idea the way you do. I wish to heaven I could keep you busy all the time. Not that I wouldn't be afraid to have you in the studio all the time—"

Ellen shrugged.

"I don't eat artists," she said, "not even raw ones like Sandy, here; not even good ones like you!"

One of the girls laughed. It was a sharp laugh, rather.

"I'm not so sure of that," she told Ellen. "I'd say, for all your wide eyes and your raised eyebrows, that you were a regular man-eater. You have a come-on game—"

"That," interrupted the man called Sandy, "that doesn't come anywhere! Ellen's come-on game somehow always fails to arrive!"

Ellen laughed ever so slightly, and surveyed her guests through the low hanging haze of their tobacco smoke. The two girls? They—she admitted it, in her mind—weren't important. Just models like herself. With stage names behind which they hid their own commonplace labels. Gay Vardon—the shorter one, with the angelic face framed in red hair. She was in demand for magazine covers, Gay. Her innocent eyes were a guarantee



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on any periodical of its faith with the public. Claire Tremaine—the tall, willowy one, who posed for fashion work. Who with her boneless, curveless figure was just a little passe in this new age of fashion elegance.

They weren't of much importance, these two. Just white of egg, beaten to a stiff froth. Not a great deal of substance, or nourishment,

there!

Sandy Mackintosh? Somehow, although his work sold readily, although he had a real flair for expression, he belonged with the two girls, Ellen told herself. His essays at love-making always bordered on the comic, for her. He was always ready to put her into one of his careless, charming illustrations, however, always ready to buy her a dinner at some place where the food was good, and the lights were low, and there was wine for the asking.

The older man, Dick Alven, He wasn't a lightweight! He didn't depend upon charm to put his drawings over. He didn't even care, always, that his paintings would interest dealers—rather than sell them! Ellen, her gaze creeping about the room, felt a thrill of affection as her eyes rested upon his face. For it was to Dick that she had first gone, quite by chance, in her quest for work. A slim, frightened child, in a scarlet cap and an unfashionable topcoat, she had come knocking at his studio door. And he with curiosity written in every line of his face, had led her into the square, somber room in which he painted.

"So you want to pose?" he had questioned. "I fancy, from your looks, that you've just run away from school, with an old copy of 'The Common Law' tucked into your pocket. Well, I do need a model. But you'll find it hard, unromantic work!"

Ellen had answered haughtily, to cover the shiver in her heart, the quake in her soul.

"I've posed all my life," she told him. "I know it's not easy. But I'm used to it!"

Dick Alven's practiced, oddly personal yet oddly impersonal gaze had run the length of her slender body. He sighed.

"You're such a kid," he told her. "Do you pose for the figure?" Ellen felt the blood mounting into her cheeks, pounding into her temples. But she answered with a certain doggedness.

"I have, of course, posed that way," she said. "I can, if there's no other work to be had. But I'd rather—not!"

Dick Alven had laughed. "I thought that would scare you out," he said. "I'd know you for an amateur any day. Who've you posed for your little bluffer?"

Ellen's head was high. The blood had receded from her cheeks.

"I posed for Mrs. Church," she said. "You must have seen her work. She specialized in drawings of children. Of young girls. She," Ellen's lips all at once were quivering; all at once the tears stood, roundly, in her eyes, "she was—my mother!"

Dick Alven, with a certain mute astonishment, had watched the tear-spill over on to the pale cheeks. He had given himself a little shake, and had closed the studio door.

"Make yourself at home," he told Ellen "I've an order for a sort of Kate Greenway mural, to dress up a halfbaked, junior league, inspired children's theatre. I can use you plenty."

And so Ellen entered the studio, and buttoned herself into a high waisted, blue-sashed muslin dress, and started out upon her career as a professional model. It was as easy as that! Under Dick's tutelage, which almost amounted to chaperonage, she met other artists, secured other work.

It was getting late. The cigarette smoke was rising toward the ceiling of the room. As soon as the bunch left, Ellen thought, she would fling up the window—and make the room sweet again.

"I think," she called now to the corner in which Gay and Sandy were sitting, very close, "that you'd better clear out. I'm working tomorrow, and I'm starting early."

Sandy eyed her reproachfully.

"Women," he said, "they're all alike. Just puppies in mangers. Ellen won't let me touch her hand. But the moment I seek any consolation in Gay, she throws me out. Jealous cat, I call her!"

Claire rose lithely from her place on the cushioned day bed. She stretched as a slim, lazy panther stretches. Nobody had been making love to Claire.

"I'm ready to blow," she said. "This party hasn't been what you'd call a wow for excitement. The story of Ellen's past is too blameless to make what might be known as a hectic evening. See me home, Dick?" there was a slightly eager note in her drawing voice. "You go my way!"

But Dick, slowly, was shaking his head.

"I'm staying on here, for a bit, after the rest of you leave," he told her. "I want to talk with Ellen. I'm the guy she's working for tomorrow. We're starting on that Indian thing—and I want to talk to her about costumes."

Sandy, rising, had dragged the

diminutive Gay to her feet.

"We'll drop you at your shanty, Claire," he said. "That is, if you're really afraid to venture out alone on the sidewalks of New York!"

Claire shrugged.

"I'd suspect you, Ellen," she said, as she pulled the season's smartest hat over her beautifully arranged hair, "only it's hard to suspect anyone with milk—frozen-milk—in



"Make yourself at home," he told Ellen.

her veins! I don't doubt," there was a queer note of almost envy in her voice, "that you and Dick will really talk about costumes."

Ellen tried, very hard, to copy the spirit of Claire's shrug.

"Be that," she said, "as it may!"

Then they were gone, the three of them. Clattering down the uncarpeted stairs, Sandy laughing—Gay's shrill giggle echoing his mirth.

"They're laughing about me," Ellen told Dick, and her tone was tranquil. "They think I'm something from another planet. That I have six toes on each foot, and they're webbed. You tell 'em different, Dick. You've seen my feet—"

But Dick was staring at her strangely, through the drifting smoke, most of which he was now creating, himself.

"Sandy may laugh at you," he said, "but he's in love with you, Ellen."

Ellen, again, attempted the shrug. It was more of a success this time. "Oh—love!" she said. Just that. Dick went on.

"So," he said evenly, "am I, for that matter! I love you, Ellen, you know. Foolish, isn't it?"

Ellen agreed.

"Yes, it is, rather," she said. "Because I have reason to suppose, Dick that love would stand for marriage, with you. You're that sort of fellow, aren't you? Well, what would marriage with you mean, Dick? Figure it out, from my point of view. Only a new name, and a wedding ring. I'd work just as hard as I'm working now. I'd have the deuce of a lot more to worry about—babies, for instance. And I wouldn't have lots of things that I have now, either."

Dick's voice rasped just a little. It was a very nice voice when it didn't have that grating note.

"What, for instance?" he questioned.

"Privacy, for instance!" Ellen answered, trying to make her tone flippant.

Dick was rising from his chair. His tall figure, despite his breadth of gauntness. He came swiftly across the room and laid his hands, not too lightly, on Ellen's shoulders.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

Cotton Situation Before Adjustment

Cotton farmers have learned that excessive supplies reduce the price of the staple and that elimination of the surplus tends to raise the price.

"For that reason, the cotton adjustment program was designed to eliminate the cotton surplus so that a bale of cotton could have as large a purchasing power as it had in the base period of 1910-14," says Charles A. Sheffield, assistant director and in charge of the Cotton Adjustment program in North

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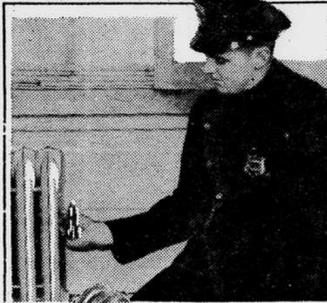
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FISH SPECTATORS AT UNDERWATER WRESTLING MATCH—Several sports-minded fish seem to have "crashed" this wrestling match between Dolly Dalton (left) the Women's Champion of Canada, and Dixie Taylor, Southern Women's Champion. The wrestling match was held at the bottom of Silver Springs, Fla.



FIGHTS FOR DAUGHTER'S CUSTODY: Mrs. Gloria Morgan Vanderbilt, at right with her twin sister, Mrs. Benjamin Thaw, photographed leaving court.



STARS WITH HARVARD—Perhaps the only Japanese football player in the country is Kioshi Tashiro, shown kicking the pigskin, with the Harvard freshman team at Cambridge, Mass.

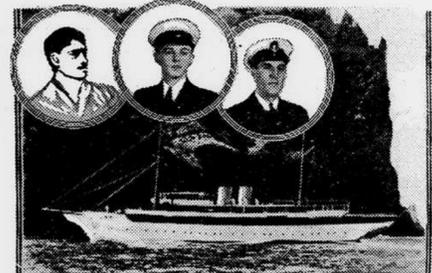


VERSATILE WRITER—Courtney Ryley Cooper, after a long and successful career as a newspaper man and author of circus and animal stories, radio continuities and moving picture scenarios, is now writing true crime stories for the American Magazine. His latest book, "Boss Elephant," is regarded as the finest contribution of the year to its special field.



A SUCCESSFUL "ANTI-SPITTING" CAMPAIGN—This guardian of the law inspects the "guardian of fuel and comfort"—the Hoffman Vacuum Valve—outstanding in its work in preventing radiators from "spitting" on floors and walls.

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"Studies made by government economists show that for five years prior to 1929, the annual gross income from cotton and cotton-seed averaged slightly over \$1,500,000,000. In 1930, it was \$750,000,000. In 1931, cotton farmers sold their 17-million bale crop for \$228,000,000 including the seed. The crop of 1932 brought \$431,000,000. This shows how the value of the crop was first cut in half and the half further cut in half again. We know what this did in the cotton South in standards of living, ability to buy and power to pay debts."

It is known that a part of this decrease in the value of the cotton crop came with the falling prices of the period but it is also a fact that the prices were further depressed due to the mounting surplus. Mr. Sheffield points out that consumption fell below production in 1929-30 and 1,800,000 bales were added to the surplus that year. In 1930-31 consumption fell still more and 2,600,000 additional bales were added to the surplus at the

close of the year. The next year, not hope to have their normal purchasing power. Mr. Sheffield says at the low points in 1932, it took three bales of cotton to buy what one bale had bought in the base period of 1910-14. The adjustment program was set up, therefore, to remedy such a situation.

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