

# One More Wedding

by HELEN WELSHIMER

### READ THIS FIRST:

Barbara Kingsley, pretty young society editor of the Martinsville Post, has just "covered" another wedding. She is tired of the routine but Peter Baxter, managing editor, cheers her fading spirits. Garry Page, New York newspaper man in town for the wedding, misses his train back and Barbara, at the train to pick up pictures, offers to drive him to the junction to catch the last train that night. They have dinner and, at the junction, run into the wedding party, including Barbara's proud cousin, Julia. A few weeks later Natalie Kendall, a close friend of Barbara's who is a New York fashion columnist, wires Barbara of an opening in a child magazine. Barbara decides to take the position and Natalie meets her upon her arrival in New York.

### NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY:

#### CHAPTER 4

NATALIE KENDALL smiled at Barbara's impulsive question: "Natalie, do you know Garry Page?"

"Yes, not well, though," she answered. "Is he on the list of people you want to meet?"

"No, I've met him. He took me to dinner one night when he missed a train."

"Maybe we'll run across him tonight."

"Tonight? Are we going out?"

"A friend of mine, Basil Addington, is taking us to dinner and a musical. We'll do a night club or two afterwards to initiate you. Garry may be around. It's his job to see what is going on."

Barbara could almost see a small door opening into Paradise. Tonight, maybe. But she only wrinkled her nose and said: "Natalie, I feel as though I have wings! Hold me or I'll fly away with joy!"

Natalie smiled indulgently. Everything about Barbara flew upward—hair, eyes, mouth, nose. "New York won't let you fly too high, my darling! Never fear."

The orange juice was sweet and cold, the coffee ring crisp and hot. And when breakfast was finished, there was a ride up Fifth avenue, past the shops, Radio City and St. Patrick's Cathedral, to a street in the east 'Fifties where Natalie had her apartment. Barbara scanned the faces on the sidewalks. Some day she would know some of these people. Out there, somewhere—perhaps in the very throng at which she gazed but more probably in one of the vast white buildings—was Garry.

She brought the conversation back to him again, and Natalie talked of Garry's work.

"Is he engaged?" Barbara had not meant to ask but the question slipped out.

Natalie laughed. "No, darling, not even reported to be. He has never been talked about with any girl, come to think of it. He's a hard working young man. Don't misunderstand. The girls would rather have his violets than a wealthy man's orchids. But he just keeps the girls as friends." She drew her brows together. "It seems to me I have seen him with someone a few times—oh, yes, Ruth Merryweather—you know, the breakfast food millions. Ruth is a sweet child."

Barbara nodded happily. So he wasn't engaged. Not even the breakfast food millions could dampen her happiness today.

Natalie's apartment was strictly modern. Chromium, white leather, and scarlet draperies made a stage set for her living room. Barbara's bedroom was done in black and silver. She felt that she had stepped into a fairy tale. Any minute, the miracles would begin. She would stay here for one week and then—well, even a room in a cheap hotel or rooming house would be all right so long as she was here where life sang, wept, laughed, ached, and ached.

Natalie, who went to her office in the afternoon, brought a long white box with her when she came at six o'clock. "A welcoming present," she said.

The box held a shining, silken dress of yellow with a minute cape that was little more than a ruffle for her face. There were sandals, too.

"I looked into your bag to get the size," Natalie explained.

"But you shouldn't have done it," Barbara said slowly. "It's so glorious but I can't afford it and I can't accept it." In the end she did because Natalie would have it no other way.

When she looked at herself in



"A welcoming present," she said.

the full-length mirror in her bedroom she hoped that she would see Garry. She never had been beautiful, she admitted honestly, but tonight there was a radiance in her face.

"You under-estimate yourself," Natalie told her. "Darling, with your hair and eyes—well, you needn't sit alone evenings."

"You are saying silly things but I like it," Barbara answered, and went out into the night with Natalie and Basil Addington who was much older than she had expected. His hair was silvery, his graceful figure was growing portly, and there were fine lines in his face. But he was friendly and interesting.

"He's a broker," Natalie offered. "He didn't go under in '29."

The dinner was good, the music skipped along the streets, and Twenty-one, where they landed eventually, was crowded for mid-summer. To Barbara the whole evening had been a preparation for that moment when she would look up to find Garry Page's bright head above the crowd. This was a magic night—anything could happen. She would see him. But he wasn't in Twenty-one and he wasn't at the El Morocco.

"Garry isn't around, I guess," Natalie offered.

"Garry?" Basil Addington queried. "Young Page, you mean?"

Barbara nodded.

"Busy, perhaps. He sails day after tomorrow, I believe."

"Sails?" For a second the music, the dancers, the room hung suspended in silence.

"To England. I saw Hadley, the producer, today. He's persuaded Garry to run over with him and do his column from there."

"What ship does he take?" Natalie asked carelessly enough.

Basil did not know.

Barbara's face was calm but she was knotting the fragile lace of her handkerchief and the chicken sandwich on her plate no longer appealed to her. Why hadn't she told him she was coming? Why had she been so filled with pride? Now he would go away—oh, a month could be an eternity! She tried to tell herself that he would have had time to do nothing but say "hello" anyway but that brief contact seemed suddenly very important.

She came to a decision before she went to sleep. In the morning she would telephone to his office. If she knew that he was going to remember her while he was gone, she could put him out of her thoughts for a month. Half a dozen words in his deep voice

could keep her contented.

Still of this mind she went into a telephone booth the next morning, but with the nickel in her hand ready to place in the slot, she hesitated. She replaced the receiver. If she should call Garry now, in the midst of his preparations to sail, he would be gracious, but he might wonder what claim a girl he had seen for three hours one summer night could have on his time. Regardless that three people were waiting for the booth, Barbara leaned against the wall to consider. She wouldn't do it. She would send him a note which he would find when he returned.

She knew that her decision was wise but her footsteps lagged a little when she went back to the street. She bought a gardenia from a flower vender and pinned it on the jacket of her gray linen suit. She put a dime into a street musician's cup.

The day was just as fair but her enthusiasm was lessened.

"Barbara Kingsley, grow up!" she told herself. "How can the guy call you when he thinks you're out in Martinsville? You did this yourself. Now like it!"

She had lunch at a tearoom and then decided to go up to the children's magazine and get acquainted. After all she didn't need Natalie to introduce her.

She was glad instantly that she had gone. The editor, a Mrs. Corbett, was sweet and plump and rather sentimental. She liked action stories, she said, but little children wanted fairy tales. She hoped Barbara could write some.

Mrs. Corbett explained the magazine's policy, then turned Barbara over to the art director for further instruction.

At the end of the afternoon, when Barbara went to say goodbye to Mrs. Corbett, she felt much happier. She knew she would like her work. The editor gave an apologetic laugh.

"I have a telephone message for you. It came in yesterday and I forgot to give it to you. Someone saw in the book notes of one of the papers that you were coming to us. Now where did I put it? Oh yes, here it is."

She handed Barbara a memorandum which read: "Call Garry Page. Eldorado 3-4555."

Mrs. Corbett pushed her telephone toward Barbara but she shook her head. She must call Garry some place where no one could hear. But out on the street she walked several blocks before she found a drug store with telephone booths. She beat a man to a booth and dialed Garry's number.

"Hello," he was saying.

(To Be Continued)

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