

SHINING PALACE

By
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THE STORY

CHAPTER I—James Lambert tries in vain to dissuade his beautiful foster-daughter, Leonora, from marrying Don Mason, young "rolling stone," whom he likes but of whom he disapproves according to his conventional business-man standards. He tells her, "Unless a house is founded upon a rock, it will not survive." Leonora suspects the influence of her half-brother, Ned, always jealous of the girl since the day his father brought her home from the deathbed of her mother, abandoned by her Italian baritone lover. Don arrives in the midst of the argument, and Lambert realizes the frank understanding between the two.

CHAPTER II—Sitting up late into the night, Lambert reviews the whole story of Nora as a child, at boarding school, studying music abroad, meeting Don on the return trip. In the morning he delivers his ultimatum, to give Don a job with Ned for a year's show-down. When Nora suggests the possibility of running away with Don, Lambert threatens disinheritance. Don agrees to the job, but before a month is over, his nerves are jumpy, he cannot sleep at night, he is too tired to go out much with Nora, and admits to her that he feels stifled. Nora soothes him with her music. He falls asleep and his face is more peaceful than it has been in many weeks.

Nora grows quieter, on, complains to her father about her life on him, and de-han see Don's spirit in away. She urges Lambert is obdurate tells her that if quit with him; that he h her. He adds that bargain it will be use for help.

CHAPTER IV—With the coming of spring, Don is full of unrest and wanderlust, and takes long walks at night. One evening a poor girl speaks to him, and in his pity for her, he gives her money. A car passes at that moment, flashes headlights and moves on. A terrific heat wave ushers in the summer, and Nora refuses to go to the country with her father. Ned, meanwhile, insinuates to his father about Don's evenings away from Nora, but Lambert refuses to listen. Meanwhile, Don broods over the undermining of his morale.

CHAPTER V—At the height of the heat wave, when Don is finding everything insupportable, Ned speaks of having the goods on him, having seen him give a girl money. When Ned scoffs at the true story of the episode, Don knocks him down, and is through. He calls Nora, who insists on running away with him to get married, realizing it is her job to restore Don's faith in himself. Her good-by to her father is met with complete silence.

CHAPTER VI—Don and Nora go to Maine and settle down in the studio of Carl Venable, a famous artist friend of Don's, whose daughter he saved from drowning. Nora writes her father. There is no answer, except her baggage, containing her entire wardrobe, and \$1,000 hidden in a gold mesh bag.

CHAPTER VIII—Ned, reading of the Masons' sailing, goes to see his father, and has a talk with Martha, the old housekeeper, who bemoans Lambert's stubbornness which is breaking his own heart and Nora's. Ned finds his father in Nora's old room, and when he offers to buy her old bed, Lambert asserts it is not his to sell, but belongs to his daughter. After Ned's departure, Lambert reads Nora's letter again, and wonders if she saw him on the pier.

CHAPTER IX—Nora's first son is born in England, while Don is successfully writing "Letters from Capri" for a London editor, and selling them in America, with Venable's illustrations. Assigned finally to Cape Town, Don comes down with typhoid, followed by the baby, and Mrs. Venable writes of Carl's drowning, leaving his last gift to Nora, a baby-crib.

CHAPTER X—Don's work suffers from his desperation to keep going, and a manuscript is returned. Nora goes over it, rewriting it, and writes to the London editor in perfect honesty. Don recovers, and a woman of the streets who has helped nurse him, gives Nora a farewell gift of a valuable Kimberley diamond. Back again in Maine, they decide to buy an old barn not far from the Venable studio, and gradually make it a home.

CHAPTER XI

It was early summer when they bought the stable with its surrounding savin-covered pastures, its stretch of dunes and beach. Don, a smile of understanding in his eyes, presented the deed to Nora with such a flourish that the white-haired notary who witnessed the signatures, inquired if she were planning to "make a palace of that old barn?"

"I've seen her do things even more incredible," laughed Don; while Nora, her face lighting at the old man's words, responded:

"It will be a palace to me, anyway—my shining palace. That's what we'll call it, thanks to your inspiration, Mr. Moore. If ever you're tempted to read the modern poets, look up Millay and perhaps you'll understand."

To her surprise the notary quoted without hesitation: "Come and see my shining palace built upon the sand? Well, this future home of yours is surely built upon the sand; and I have no doubt you'll make it shine surpassingly. Yes, I love the poets, Mrs. Mason, though as a rule my taste in poetry is as old-fashioned as I am myself. But I've heard Miss Millay read her own verses, and that makes a difference. Let me know when the latch string is out and I'll pay my respects to the Royal Family!"

"We'll bid you to dine some evening in the banquet hall!" smiled Nora as they turned away.

"And who," said Don, when they stood in the sunlight outside the hideous frame building which housed the notary's small office, "who would suspect that aged patriarch of reading the moderns?"

"I would," retorted Leonora. "He's no moss-back, Don. He's a perfect example of what they used to call a scholar and a gentleman. But he'll never know how superbly that quotation fits our case. Father told me once, back in the days when he was fighting the thought of our marriage, that to survive, a house must be built upon a rock."

"Safe upon the solid rock the ugly houses stand; Come and see my shining palace built upon the sand!"

"Don't you see what I mean?" "I see that you don't regard me as possessing the comfortable stability of a rock, my dear!"

"You possess it in the essentials," replied Nora soberly, "which is all that matters; and you've got the lovely changing quality of the sand, as well. When I was a small girl Dad took me to the sea one summer. I used to sit for hours on the beach, Don, and with a wee tin shovel lift off layer after layer of damp sand; and every layer was different from the one before—like beautiful fabrics woven in varying patterns. It used to fascinate me because I never knew what the next layer would be; and it's the same with you, dear. Just as I'm sure I know you inside out, up springs some quality I hadn't dreamed of! Who wants an ugly house to live in year after year, Don, if one can have a palace for—for enchanted intervals?"

"I wish you wouldn't say such things on a public street, Nora," complained her husband. "It might shock these repressed, undemonstrative natives of the state of Maine to see a man embrace his wife under a telephone pole! Come on now, let's beard the village carpenter in his den. There's no time to spare if we're to see the beginnings of this home you've set your heart on before we sail for Naples on November tenth."

"Oh, let's not think about November tenth!" Don felt a pang at the protest in Nora's voice. "I want to forget such things as boats and railroads and suitcases for a little while. We've got four months before we have to leave, Don. We can do a lot. And it won't be so hard to go away if our home's in order (or even disorder!), waiting to welcome us again next spring."

Don said, as they turned down a side street: "Would you rather not go to Italy this year, Nora?"

"We must," she answered. "I promised Constance. Their villa seems so big and lonely without Ven. And it's such a wonderful chance for you, Don. You can fare forth gathering material to write about, and know that the boys and I are safe and comfortable. Of course we'll go; but it will be so wonderful to know we are coming back! And when Father finds we're really living somewhere—somewhere civilized, I mean (you know his feeling about Europe!), he may come to see us. I—I am sure he will."

Tom Littlefield, a weatherbeaten but vigorous man of sixty-odd, was in his shop; a neat white building at the rear of his comfortable dwelling house. "He makes me think of a tree at timberline," Don said later. "The sort I've seen in the Colorado Rockies, gnarled by the wind, you know, but strong and sturdy."

The man's face brightened at sight of Leonora. It brightened still more when she disclosed their plans. Don, content to stand aside and watch them, saw at a glance that they understood each other, this strangely assorted pair. "I see," the carpenter kept saying, "I see." And when she had finished: "What I'd advise, Mis' Mason, is to measure up the place and make a sketch of where you want partitions. I'll run you down in the Ford right now, and we'll look it over. And I'll be on hand at seven sharp tomorrow mornin' ready to begin."

"I'm not a union man, though I've nothin' at all against those that is. But I've been my own master too long now to be willin' to take orders. If I want to quit at noon and go fishin' off the point, I quit. If I feel like workin' till seven at night to finish somethin' I set out to do, I work. And I work honest. No one ever complained of a house built by Tom Littlefield. Let's go." Then, and then only did Don speak. He said, with discretion learned of marriage: "But we'll have to know something about the cost, Mr. Littlefield. This wife of mine has a prejudice against running bills."

The carpenter raised a rugged, protesting hand.

"That'll be all right. You're honest folks, and I'm not worryin' about my pay. This little lady has got to be made comfortable. When the job's done, pay what you can, and the balance whenever it comes handy. I been doin' business that way for forty years (so long's I knew the folks I dealt with), and I never lost a copper. Now let's not waste any more time."

Nor did they! It was astonishing how fast the work progressed. For as wholeheartedly as he had ever embarked on an adventure, Don threw himself into the making of Nora's home. Day by day, early and late, he worked beside the carpenter. Nora worked too, at any task she could lay hands on. Even small Donald carried out rubbish with solemn pride in the thought that he was "helping build our house."

Sometimes the old carpenter would disagree with Nora. The size of the living room disturbed him.

"It's too big," he protested. "It won't be snug and cozy like a sittin' room should be. It's big as a ball room!"

"It is a ball room," retorted Nora, "and as for its being cozy—you wait and see! A baby-grand piano takes up space, you know; and—Oh, don't fuss any more," she pleaded. "I want it big. I've lived in band-boxes for six years."

"Well," sighed the old builder with a dubious shake of his gray head, "it's your house; but remember I warned you."

Don would pause in his hammering when these discussions raged. Sometimes he'd say over his shoulder: "Oh, let her alone, Mr. Littlefield. She's on the war path!" And the grizzled product of the "wild New England shore" would wink solemnly, pick up his tools, and continue to do exactly as Nora said.

They concentrated on the living room at first; and when the partitions were in place and the wide casement windows finished, it was Leonora who tacked builders' paper to the walls of one end, while a mason from the Port constructed a chimney at the other; and Don and Tom Littlefield moved their work bench into one of the box stalls that was destined to become a kitchenette.

"And what I don't understand," grumbled the old man good-naturedly, "is why anyone in their senses should want a sittin' room big enough to accommodate a trolley line, and a kitchen so small you can't eat breakfast there cold mornin's. 'Tain't sensible, if you ask me."

"But I didn't ask you," retorted Nora while he grinned at her impudence. "It's not suitable for a Royal Family to eat in the kitchen, Mr. Littlefield; and besides, those next two stalls are to be the banquet hall."

"What do you think this old barn is?" he questioned sternly. "Wind-sor Castle? The Royal Family! Whoever heard o' such a thing?" But he kept right on obeying orders; and one day astonished Nora by inquiring where "the royal bed-chamber" was to be—upstairs or down?

Overhearing the question

collapsed with mirth. A royal bed-chamber seemed so foreign to this sturdy old builder with the New England twang in his voice, and the New England sense of humor (so often mistaken for something quite the opposite) lurking in the depths of his blue eyes.

The weeks passed rapidly. Mid-August was there before they knew it; but Tom Littlefield continued to arrive at seven o'clock, and not once had he been tempted to "quit at noon."

Don arose early in those days, tiptoed about the shack getting a light breakfast, and sometimes left before Nora was awake. Later she followed with the children and a picnic lunch; the baby took his nap in an old packing box, oblivious



It was Leonora who suggested moving in.

to the sound of hammer and saw; while small Donald sat on a nail keg and handed things to his father as requested, forgetting in this absorbing interest that he'd intended tunneling to Italy that season.

It was Leonora who suggested moving in. "It'll save the long walk night and morning, Don. It'll save time; and it can't be much more inconvenient than the shack is now. The living room—" ("Ball room," corrected the builder dryly) "is entirely finished. The fireplace burns like a breeze; and there's a sink in the kitchen even if there's no water running into it."

"And speaking of water," observed Don, "the report on this well water is O. K., Nora. It came this morning. Why shouldn't we move?"

(Continued Next Week)

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SURPRISE BIRTHDAY DINNER

Mrs. Mattie Faucette was honored by a birthday dinner given by her children last Sunday at her home, Zebulon R. 1. The dinner was spread picnic fashion on the back porch of her home, and a very enjoyable time was had by all present. Those who joined in the occasion were: Frank Faucette and family, Amos A. Wells and family, Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Faucette, J. H. Faucette, Mr. John R. Bailey and family, Sam Lewis, Dexter Hinton, Henry Faucette, and Misses Eula May Whitaker and Pauline Mitchell.

Wake X Roads

There were 98 at Sunday School Sunday and we hope there will be more next Sunday.

There will be choir practice at the church Thursday night at 8 o'clock.

Mrs. Sam Forsythe and family of Creedmoor, spent the day at the home of her sister, Mrs. Lillie Liles.

We are sorry to learn of the illness of Mrs. Eddie O'Neal, who is at Mary Elizabeth Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Jones and family and Mrs. Walter Watkins and son visited in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Horace Poole Sunday.

Everyone was glad to see the nice rain last week.

Misses Edith and Ruby Smith of Neuse are improving nicely from the wreck they were in May 4th.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie R. Massey of Raleigh, Mr. Culver Rogers of Washington, D. C., Raymond and Anna Rogers and Mary Jeffers of Neuse, visited in the home of Miss Clarice Blackley last Tuesday night.

WIND AND RAIN

The rain of last week was followed by hard wind and unseasonable cold. Fires were required for comfort on Sunday. Wind whipped the tender growth of young plants and leaves, bruising and tearing them. Green fruits were blown from trees and in some instances large branches broke. Monday was fair but still chilly.

Farmers are busy in their fields. Many tobacco plants are being set and there is almost a premium on tomato and pepper plants in this community.

HARRY LAUDER INJURED

Glasgow, Scotland.—A slip in his bathroom caused 67-year-old Sir Harry Lauder, famed Scotch comedian, to be removed to a hospital suffering from painful injuries of the face and thigh.

VOTE FOR



ROY M. BANKS for CORONER of Wake County

Your vote and support in the Primary June 4 will be appreciated.