

Heart of Happiness

by PEGGY O'MORE AP Newsfeatures

Chapter 7
Arleta gave Howard a pitying glance. "It couldn't," she stated. "In the first place only tools and equipment went their way on an animate thing. In the second, I knew my father better than anyone knew him. He never explained. He said to explain was to put an alibi and lower yourself to the level of sniveling."

"That's arrogant," protested Kelly. Arleta shook her head. "No, not in him it was not. He never did anything he knew was not right. To use his words, he mated now, 'first know you are right and to hell with the explanation.'"

Kelly, banking the fire straightened up. "I'd better be on my way. Sure you don't want to spend the night at my place?"

She thanked him and a bed had to thank his mother for her thoughtfulness, and to follow him down the narrow stairs to bolt the door after him. But when she returned to the nursery it was to return to loneliness.

When she awakened, she wondered if it was another day. It certainly looked like the same as the previous one, with clouds that seemed to smother her in an almost sudden flood of steady down-pour. The room and window making her doubts cruelly real for the wood floor Kelly had left behind.

From the thoughtfully packed larger bag she brought riding breeches and boots, sweater and a newly purchased leather jacket. She'd anticipated the cold but not the rain. Well, perhaps she'd find one of the old ponchos around the place.

A cup of coffee and she started out. Out of doors she found the same rain. At first she felt only fury, fury that anyone had dared destroy this beloved home her parents had built with such care. And then the fury, chilled to cold anger and a purpose crystallized.

Turned back by undergrowth, she built up the nursery fire, took portfolio and fountain pen to the low table and wrote three letters. The first was written to Mart Martin.

"You said you wanted an opportunity to experiment with your pomological theories. I'll bargain. I haven't been up to the orchard but everything else is overgrown. However, if you and Tina will come out and work for me we'll have a contract drawn up giving you the right to do as you please with that particular five acres. Living quarters and salary will be arranged."

"I'd like you to come at once. Mart will give you the key to my car. Freight everything you want in my name, with items on the enclosed list that I shall need. I am also enclosing a list of clothing to bring with you."

The second letter she wrote to Cal Sheridan. "You understand I can't marry until I've created the Langtry name. I don't think that will be difficult. Knowing my father, I know he was too proud to bother."

The final letter was to her aunt and this was rewritten many times. "It would have been kinder to let me know the truth or as much of it as you know."

And—Please announce the wedding is postponed indefinitely. When Howard Kelly called from below she was ready. "If you're not ashamed to drive me as far as the bus in these fog," she re-

marked. Kelly heaved a sigh of relief as she handed him her bags. She was actually preparing to leave.

He offered to take her to the nearest city, but she named a nearby resort town she knew would be open. "I need a general refurbishing," she explained reasonably.

When he left her at a dry cleaning establishment, she thanked him appropriately and turned away with "I really must hurry."

And then she waited until he, having shopped, turned his car back toward his home. "Now," she turned to the proprietor, "where can I hire a car?"

An hour later she was driving back along the road she had traveled with Kelly. When they had discussed the sunniest resort cottages the previous day her maid had photographed one with a For Rent sign on it.

She made two more trips that day, one for a home-dance hall to the city and an inspection of the cottage, then back for several boxes of business contacts and the purchase of supplies.

That evening found Arleta preparing her dinner in a tiny kitchenette with occasional trips to the large room where she tended fire. And when her dinner was over and the divan bed prepared, she sat down to a card table to check her day's work.

A crew of men to clean the house. Electricians to repair the wires, a pump man to check the pump, but first two men to clear the roadway of the big tree.

She awakened to the coldest weather she had ever experienced, even the sun trickling in through the pines was like lemon ice.

Where, the previous morning, mists had shrouded the view, there now lay a lake of sparkling blue, vivid against the green-topped red hills on the far side, the snow-covered range beyond.

This her father had had the vision to see, this beauty he had given to the people of this section. And to the plains below, irrigation, a controlled water supply in a country of summer drought.

And what had he received in return? Arleta dug her heels into the terrace. She'd change that. She'd force these people to honor his memory.

Chapter 8
By noon a furniture man had come in from the city. He surveyed the place and shook his head. "Wasn't this insured?"

Arleta thought a moment and then remembered the signs lacked to both front gate and house. But when they sought them they were gone. "And my sister would have the papers," murmured Arleta.

"Besides," the man said, "there be a time limit set for notification. You haven't any idea when it happened?"

Arleta shook her head. She'd no idea about anything. "Little Lady," said the furniture man kindly, "you need an attorney to handle these affairs for you."

Arleta glanced at her watch. She remembered the bank. If she hurried she could reach town before it closed.

At two-forty a strange figure strode through the bank aisles, heading for the vice president's office, and after one look he both smiled and frowned.

"You would be Little Chips," he stated. "How do you know?" she de-

Cove Creek 4-H Leaders To Be Named Friday

Cove Creek residents will elect 4-H Club leaders when they hold their Community Development Program meeting at 7:30 P. M. Friday.

The 4-H Club work for the new year is scheduled to occupy their attention through the major portion of the meeting.

Vinson Morrow, the community chairman, will preside at the session, which will be held in the Cove Creek Baptist Church.

manded. "That walk." He bowed to his client and turned his full attention upon Arleta. "You're not moving out, are you?"

"I have moved," she answered stiffly. "Why do you know the condition in which I found the house?"

"Condition?" He ushered her in and seated her. "Well, Doakes is getting old."

"Doakes?" she asked. "Who is Doakes?"

"The caretaker." He seemed surprised. "Your sister left orders he should be kept on. We've been running his check. Miss Langtry, your expression."

She told him then of the vandalism, that there had been no sign of a caretaker having been near for more than a year.

He looked at her puzzled. "Then you haven't been to your 'dearly deposited box' I'm sure you'd find your policies there."

"Been to it?" she flared. "I didn't even know I had one. But before we go further, issue no more checks to Doakes. As for the attorney you'd allow—"

"Now, wait, Miss Langtry. If it hadn't been for Jim Devers' loyalty to your father's memory, you wouldn't have had a house in any condition. He passed away immediately after winning the suit instituted against your heritage. The office force carried on as far as they could, awaiting the return of his son."

"And when does this son return?"

"He's here now. He should be quite capable of representing you."

It was twilight when Arleta left town. She had found "Young Jim" Devers in Arleta could have made a friend of him, but it was Chips he interviewed.

As the rented car lurched along the road she reviewed the encounter. And she accepted his final. "I'm sorry, Miss Langtry. You're not being fair. I advise you to find someone else to represent you."

He had suggested an attorney and she had gone to him and, once there, had burst into angry tears when he had aked her if there was to man in her family to advise her.

"I'll do what I can," he said. "I'll have the insurance adjuster out there tomorrow."

Intent upon her troubles, Arleta drove through the last town without thought of shopping and, too tired to return, drove up to the resort store. For a moment she at trying to remember what she needed, wishing there were a restaurant nearby, and in that moment she heard the buzz of many voices from the store.

But when she entered the buzz stopped as though it had been elied off. The storekeeper looked at her with cold contempt.

"A quart of milk and a loaf of bread," she stammered.

"What, no caviar?" asked someone in falsetto.

Arleta took the milk and bread and walked slowly out of the store. And as she reached the platform she heard the buzz begin again, but now it was the buzz of angry bees.

What was wrong? What had happened in her absence? Why hadn't she been told? But more than anything, why had she allowed herself to accept the feeble explanations which had been given her?

Surprisingly, daylight brought her joy, a refreshing interest in life. She had something to do, many things to do—a home to rebuild, a mystery to solve. The insurance adjuster arrived early, and with him was the attorney, and both exclaimed in dismay at what they saw.

All morning she directed the salvaging of articles to be repaired, or to be set aside for replacement, and at noon, her bottle of milk and sandwich at hand, went out to the wrecked grape arbor to sit in the sun and watch the lake dance far below.

She was deep in dreams of what Cal would find when he came for her, so deep in dreams she believed the voice she heard calling her a part of that dream.

"Chipsie, Chipsie, dearie!" Involuntarily she looked for a place to hide, then awakened to reality, turned and saw a woman coming toward her, a white-haired woman in a rusty black coat, a basket over her arm.

"Well, if it isn't Chipsie," she declared as Arleta. "Why, dearie, you don't remember me," she cried reproachfully. "I'm Mrs. Cotsen, Mother Cotsen you used to call me."

"Oh," Arleta's lips framed the start of surprise, then graciously, "Of course. You live in the cottage on the west bank."

"I came up the minute I heard you were here. Even fried a chicken for you. Heard you were a-bathing. Well, my goodness—"

Recreation Features Meeting At Francis Cove

By MRS. WM. HOLLINGSWORTH Mountaineer Correspondent

Songs, devotionals and entertainment features dominated the program at the Francis Cove Community Development Program meeting late last month.

After singing opened the meeting, Bill Hollingsworth read Scripture, and then Community Chairman Robert Boone offered a prayer.

Mr. Boone followed this by opening the business session.

After the discussion, he turned the program over to Mr. Hollingsworth, who is the community recreation chairman.

Everyone at the meeting took part in the games that followed, then ginger bread and cider were served.

Serving the guests were Mrs. Gilbert Inman, Mrs. Homer West, Mrs. Bill Hollingsworth, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Boone, and Mrs. Henry Francis.

The next monthly meeting will be held the latter part of this month.

HOME JAIL PREFERRED

STRAWN, Tex. (UPI)—A Strawn man got into a tavern fight at nearby Mingus, returned here, called up officer Ben Bradford and told him he was going to jail and lock himself up. When Bradford reached the jail, the man was behind bars.

she pushed aside broken vines and found a place for herself and her basket — "if you haven't grown up to be a real lady. But I don't think you look stuck up."

"Stuck up?" Arleta, relieved at finding someone friendly, laughed. "Well, of course, having lived such a life, a body would expect you to be. Having lunch? You could do justice to a drumstick, maybe?"

"Having lived on my own cooking for a few days, I most certainly could," she agreed. "Not aiming to stay, are you?" asked the friendly voice.

"Indeed I am," Arleta answered, "at least for a little while."

The white head shook. "I heard the house was in an awful state," she confided.

"You mean you haven't seen it?"

"No, dearie. I've only been up once since your father was murdered."

(To be continued)

Moss-Grown Industry Heads For New Boom



Moss on trees is a novelty in the mountains, but down in the low country, moss grows on just about every tree, and now looms as a valuable industry, as several uses have been found for the "refined" moss. This is a picture of workers starting out in flat bottomed boats to gather the Spanish moss from the limbs of the trees.

By WARREN ROGERS, JR. AP Newsfeatures

BATON ROUGE, La. — Louisiana's Spanish Moss crop may treble its million-dollar annual take, the way the Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry tells it. Here's what the department says:

Spanish moss just grows and grows. It's hard to find a tree in south Louisiana that isn't sporting a moss tignon.

Some people—like L. M. Joffron, Sr., of Napoleonville, La., and his three sons — makes a living at collecting it. After all, it's there for the picking. There's no planting, no cultivation. Just harvest.

After it's gathered, the moss is ginned and sold, chiefly through New Orleans and New York brokers, for use mainly in furniture upholstery. Last year the official

gross revenue was estimated at \$1,100,000.

But what about the waste — the fibrous bark that's left over after it's been ginned? That's where the elder Joffron comes in.

"It's black gold," he says. "Instead of throwing it away, like we've been doing for 40-odd years, we save it. I've got machines that dehydrate it and pulverize it."

"It comes out a fine black mulch and plays an important part in agricultural experiments. Some day it may be just the thing for rejuvenating and restoring this country's topsoil."

It's on this note the Commerce and Industry Department ends its report. It recalls that Louisiana's moss industry once brought \$3,000,000 annual revenue, observing:

"With the utilization of the by-product from the ginning, the moss industry may return to its former economic bracket."

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