



Heart of Happiness

by PEGGY O'MORE

AP Newsfeatures



Await News of Kin



IN THEIR New York hotel suite, Mrs. Lane, wife of China's acting President Li Tsung-jen, and her son, Jackson Li, await news from the Presbyterian Hospital on the condition of the Chinese Chief of Staff, Li, accompanied by his family, flew to the U. S. from Hongkong for treatment of ulcers. (International)

Chapter 26

How Kelly was downstairs. Martin said he refused to leave until he'd talked to her. And Arleta, after a little while, decided she might as well see him and have it over.

"You and your aunt have to leave for the Carsons' as of now," he ordered. "Someone took a pot shot at Cal as he rounded the lower driveway."

"I'm sorry it was Cal," Arleta said tonelessly. "but I'm not leaving. Not yet."

"Good heavens, don't you care what happens to you?"

Arleta stared at him a moment. "Not particularly." And then she changed. "Why, yes, I do care. I have some work to do before I'm run off. I can do it in town as well."

"Have you lost your senses?" Kelly roared at her. "What would Big Chips think to hear you talk like a nincompop?"

"He'd understand. You see how I've just read a message he left. Big Chips did swindle the valley farmers out of their land. I think he didn't mean to. He was evidently gambling on something, taking a chance, and he wrote that that man Ace called his hand."

Under the shaggy brows Kelly's eyes were the blue of the dark lake at midday. "Going to show me?" he asked.

"Why not?" She shrugged.

She brought the book down and the paper upon which she had deciphered the message. And suddenly Kelly's head went up as

though he were hearing something beyond her ken.

"Come on; hop up and pack a bag and get your aunt ready. You're getting out of here!"

Arleta, silent with grief the rest of the way to the city, was surprised to find they'd driven up to a hotel. Obediently she followed her aunt into the almost deserted lobby, watched her register and followed her to an elevator.

They stepped off on the first floor above the mezzanine and followed the bell hop down two flights of stairs, and into a basement garage where he promptly packed the bags into a sedan.

"Hop in," ordered Caro Carson at the wheel. She turned to Mrs. Worthington. "You won't mind lying down in the rear seat for a little while, will you? And, little Chips if you're good, I'll let you kneel on that cushion on the floor until we're out of town. All set? Here we go."

She went smoothly out of the garage into the street, idled along as though in no hurry, drove east, though Arleta knew the mesa was due south. And then when they were well away from street lights and Caro was sure she was not being followed, she gave an "all clear."

Arleta slipped over the back of the seat to sit beside her. "This is the most insane procedure. Would you mind telling me what goes on?"

"Didn't How tell you?"

"He said someone had taken a

pot shot at Mr. Sheridan."

"Someone," corrected Caro. "took a shot at a cream-colored car bearing a Virginia license. And they meant business."

Arleta gave a little groan. More of the bitter heritage?

"We'll carry a story on it in the morning," Caro continued, "to let whoever fired the shot know there is more than one cream-colored car with a Virginia license here."

"But Martin drives my car."

"Not at that hour of the night. Besides, our story says you and your aunt are returning to Virginia."

"And what am I going to?" Arleta asked.

"Sitting tight until the sheriff's office has a chance to investigate."

"Caro," she began thoughtfully, "when you write about my aunt and me leaving for Virginia, could you mention I'd broken my engagement to Mr. Sheridan?"

She felt the car jerk as she spoke; then Caro looked down. Arleta was carrying, not wearing her gloves. Her left hand was gripping her right and the dial board light showed that the ring finger was bare.

"When," demanded Caro, "did that happen?"

"Night before last," she answered.

They were silent then. Arleta fighting the leaden weights which seemed to lie on her eyes and upon her spirit. And then when she was sure she could sit upright no longer, the mesa loomed black against a star-patched sky.

Only a night light burned in the patio and no others were turned on. Chita came to the door, her brown face warm with welcome.

"You take care of them," Caro ordered confidently. "I'll be out as soon as I can."

Mr. Carson returned the next morning. He brought with him a long box filled with deep yellow rosebuds, barely tipped with pink. There was a card and a letter enclosed from Cal.

"Leta darling," he wrote, "I don't like Kelly's assumption we should be kept apart for the present. I sometimes wonder if he hasn't designs upon you himself, if he wasn't instrumental in your returning the ring, not that I consider your action more than a gesture of justified pride. Kelly told me the truth. I did jump to the wrong conclusion. Believe me, I'm deeply sorry."

Arleta looked off to the east where yesterday's clouds had massed to march along, black shoulder to brown. She could laugh at how Kelly's having "designs" on her.

And she supposed she shouldn't blame Cal too severely. Yet Kelly had said that if he were Cal he wouldn't care what her father had been.

She reread the note. "Kelly told me the truth." Would she have waited for someone to tell her the truth about Cal before believing in him? Ah yes, she had doubted back there eons ago when her aunt had spoken of "inherited tendencies."

There were other assurances of his love. She felt she must lay them upon some shelf until the time came for her to make a decision.

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cutting a wide swath of light on the desert floor. She'd have to meet Allene sooner or later. And the Lanes had the greatest losers in the Langtry fiasco.

"But I don't like it," she thought.

"I'm heading back to meet a prospect as soon as I drop you at Allene's," Calvin said as they turned up the canyon road the next day. "I'll stop by the mesa in a day or so and we'll begin to set dates."

A maid came to the door. Miss Allene had gone riding and hadn't yet returned. Mrs. Lane was in the sun room.

"I'll go on," said Calvin.

He did, but not far, for Arleta, stepping into the sun room, saw Allene pull a spirited chestnut mare up beside his car and wondered if it hadn't been this planned.

Mrs. Lane was standing awaiting her attention. Arleta, turning to her, surprised an expression in the woman's eyes which held her taut, questioning. If Allene's first glance had been one of black hatred, what was this?

"Won't you sit down, Miss Chips?" asked the fretful voice.

Arleta debated, then sat in the proffered chair and felt it a stool of inquisition. And as she sat on the slippery surface she tried to place Mrs. Lane. She was different from most of the women with whom Arleta had associated and she couldn't define the difference. But did it matter? Allene was making a noisy entrance.

"Good," said Allene in greeting. "think you had what it took. Trot along, Mums, I can handle this better alone. Cigarette?"

Arleta shook her head and waited. This was hardly the atonement approach.

"Cal," Allene tossed the name as lightly as a glass bauble, "tells me you two are going to be married next week."

"I suppose," said Arleta quietly, "that you're leading up to something. Mr. Sheridan said you wanted me to call, that we might become acquainted, become friends. He was obviously wrong. Suppose we came to the point; what do you want of me more than I'm giving?"

"Cal Sheridan," answered Allene promptly. "And I'm not asking; I'm telling you."

morning. For a little while Arleta sat looking out on the brilliant world of gold and purple left in the storm's wake; then she turned to the wary man. "Mr. Maine, I've learned my father was guilty of defrauding the valley farmers. I want to make restitution."

"Have you any conception of what this will cost you?" he asked.

Arleta's eyes were dark with thought. "Yes, fifty percent more than I possess. Having known what, even fifty percent of what was due them will be of more value now than it was four years ago. I want a list of the valley farmers, their holdings, what was due them. We'll try to repay on a percentage basis. And, Mr. Maine, I must know how much is due the Lanes."

He left, promising High Plateau would be placed on the market. He also promised that Arleta, disguised, would be taken on a shopping trip by a discreet real estate agent, an agent who would know where to find living quarters and orchard lands for the Martins.

It was nearly four weeks when Mr. Maine came out to announce everything had been completed insofar as it was possible.

"The Lanes are the only claimants left. We have a possible prospect for your home on the high plateau. They want to pay less than what we've established as a fair price, yet..."

"The Lanes," said Arleta thoughtfully, "claim to be the ones most deeply hurt by my father. I can't pay them off without exacting the full price of my home, unless..."

She would sell her car, sell the small jewelry she owned.

When this was done, she had paid, insofar as she was able, every claim any person had made upon Big Chips Langtry. She had left nothing but her personal belongings. The Lanes had their claim measured not in dollars alone but in cents.

Calvin Sheridan arrived the night this claim was met. His eyes were bright with pride as he came toward her, and Leta thought she had never seen a man so handsome.

"You're Arleta again," he said, taking both of her hands. "I thought I'd lost you forever."

Mr. Carson left them alone in the big room which looked out over the moon-flooded desert land. But Calvin had little thought for the view.

"You're free again, Leta," he reported. "They've caught the man who was making trouble. It was Doakes. He's being sent to a Veterans' Hospital. Poor devil had never seen a man so handsome."

So it had been Doakes. And here the money had arrived too late. Yet his wife could use the plot of land and the comfortable cottage Mr. Maine had helped her choose.

"I think we'd better make plans," Calvin's voice broke in on her thoughts. "The Desert View Apartments will be ready for occupancy in a couple of months. If we make a choice now you can dictate the interiors, what colors you want the rooms tinted, the linoleum, bath tile and that sort of thing. Also, Allene wants to entertain for you, see you meet..."

"Allene!" Arleta sat up, dark hair tossed back. "She wants to entertain for me?"

"She's very anxious to be friends, Leta," Cal said in a reproving tone. "She feels she's misjudged you in the past and wants to atone. Surely, dear, after all of the other concessions you've made, you can be big enough to do this. You do owe it to her, don't you?"

Calvin would take her to the Lanes', Allene would bring her back into town, and Caro would relay her on out to the Carsons', Cal said. And Arleta nodded.

"Then tomorrow about eleven," Cal said.

She might as well, she thought, watching the headlights of his car

Celebration Cake



ON THE FIRST birthday of an association made up of parents and relatives of GI brides from the United States and Canada, Mrs. B. Smith of Malden, Mass., presents a cake. The anniversary party was held in Bermondsey, England. Agreement was made for the "in-laws" to exchange news of their children abroad. (International)

TEAM SPIRIT STRONG
COLLEGEVILLE, Minn. (UP)—After coaching St. Johns College through an eight-game football schedule, Coach Joe Benda was taken to a hospital for treatment of a severe case of Hodgkin's disease. His players, all 33 of them, promptly reported at the hospital and offered to donate blood.

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(To be continued) SMITH'S DRUG STORE

FROST OVERHEATED
TERRE HAUTE, Ind. (AP)—A rookie policeman said someone on his beat had been putting chairs on parking meters and he was coming to make it hot for them. Later charged was a motorist named Jack Frost.

There'll be Christmas crow on Long Distance, too

Long distance telephone lines crowded on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We'll be on the job our best to put calls through. We added a lot of circuits and rearranged others. Every switchboard will service. Even so, there may be a wait.

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The Ashley
SMALL HOUSE PLANNING BUREAU

THE ASHLEY has 2 bedrooms and no basement. The concrete floor slab is poured on a gravel fill with hot water pipes imbedded in the slab for radiant heat.

The utility room, next to the kitchen, contains the laundry, heating unit, broom, coat and storage closets.

The bedrooms have closet space for current and storage use. There is a coat closet in the living room and a linen closet in the bedroom hall, a total of 9 closets.

The L-shaped living-room has cross ventilation and inherent. A fireplace can be added in the center closet.

Cabinets in the small, compact kitchen are efficiently arranged. The kitchen also has a dinette set area. All rooms open into or are accessible to the small central hall.

By using a flat roof and omitting the attic, The Ashley's total cubage is further reduced. The roof joists are used as ceiling joists, covered with roof boards, insulation and gravel roof with pitch, the same as in commercial buildings.

Walls are frame, but concrete block can also be used.

Overall dimensions are 34 by 34 feet. Floor area is 1,081 square feet and volume is 10,810 cubic feet.

For further information about THE ASHLEY, write the Small House Planning Bureau, St. Cloud, Minn.

Small House Planning Bureau
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Please send me more information, without obligation, about the plan features and the type of construction used in THE ASHLEY House as pictured in The Mountaineer.

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