

Sylvia of the Minute

By
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WNU Service

CHAPTER VI—Continued

"Not always. Sometimes," she answered guardedly.

"I should think the schoolroom would be too dark for you to work there so late."

"I usually stop working before dark."

"But this evening?"

"I—lingered on—"

A brief silence.

"I must warn you, Miss Schwenckton, it's not really safe for you to be alone after dark either in your school room or on this lonely road."

"Then I'm thankful you're with me."

"But what detained you so late?"

"Oh—this and that—a bit of work—"

"Correcting spelling-papers, I presume?"

"Really, Mr. Creighton, your interest in perfectly unimportant, trivial things like spelling-papers! My—goodness!"

"I'll bet you never bore yourself with correcting spelling-papers! Not you!"

"How you came by the impression that I'm so light-minded as never to correct spelling-papers! Well, to be sure, it isn't my favorite pastime. I do sometimes indulge in other diversions."

No use—he could not trap her into admitting that she had been working in her schoolroom, but walking on the highway. Why didn't she want to admit it?

"Oh!" he exclaimed as at this instant she tripped over a rough place in the dark road and, to his consternation, fell headlong. "Are you hurt?" he solicitously inquired in alarm as he lifted her and she leaned against him panting.

"No, no. Don't you know, Mr. Creighton," she asked, as she moved out from the circle of his arm, "how dangerous it is to lift a fallen woman?"

"What a h—l of a road!" she remarked as they resumed their walk cautiously, his hand under her arm to guide her.

"There are just two kinds of girls," said Marvin, "that would talk about a h—l of a road—high-born ladies and toughs! As a country teacher and pious Sam Schwenckton's relative, you don't come under either of these heads. What must I conclude?"

"That I adapt my speech to my company. When I'm with—Cousin Sam—my speech is Yea and Nay."

"If it were more than that I'm sure he would not harbor you—if for no other reason than for your corrupting influence on his children. You're not afraid he might have your school taken from you?"

"He would if he thought it was his duty to," she nodded, her tone expressing supreme indifference to this fate so dreaded of the county teachers.

"You wouldn't mind that—losing your school?" he asked curiously.

"It would be hard on the school. They'd not get another teacher like me in a hurry!" she smiled.

"I can well believe you!"

"I've always thought people that don't know me miss a lot!"

"I'm sure I've gained a lot in knowing you!"

"Thanks. Same to you. And if I were dismissed," she added with a sigh, "all the elegant education I'm getting in textbook lore would be brought to an untimely end! I'm learning a lot through teaching—from geography up."

"Up? Up to what?"

"Oh, the multiplication tables up to twelve. I never knew them so well beyond seven."

"Then for the sake of your education, I hope Sam Schwenckton doesn't find out what he's harboring in his family! But really, Miss Schwenckton," added Marvin earnestly, a solicitous note in his voice, "I'm afraid that with the sort of trustees we have in this district a teacher like you can't hold down this job long! I'd hate like the dickens to have your bigoted old trustees fire you, so let me warn you—do be a bit prudent—if it's in you to be! I've been hearing complaints—"

"Of me?"

"—from the parents. A small boy in your school, Jakey Raffensburger, roused his parents' suspicions by being so enamored of school since you've taught it, when heretofore he had to be flogged to make him go, that they were moved to investigate the reason and he admitted, after much probing, that he'd rather go to school to you than see a movie, because you told them about 'devils,' showed them pictures of devils and acted the devil for them! Satan, it seems, has become to Jakey a hero, to the unspeakable horror of his devout parents, who, believe me, take the devil seriously! They complained to me that they didn't send their child to school to learn to love and admire the devil! So I interviewed Jake and found you'd been telling these children of scenes from 'Paradise Lost!'"

"A little English poetry surely can't be objected to, Mr. Creighton?"

"It's not in the curriculum, Miss Schwenckton! Stick to the curriculum just enough to hold your job, can't you?"

"But do you know I couldn't endure

my job a week if I didn't liven it up with a little of the joy of life!"

"Joy of life—'Paradise Lost'? You'll be brightening their lives with Dante's 'Inferno' next! By the way," he suddenly remembered, "you're booked for a talk to the district teachers at their monthly meeting next Saturday. aren't you?"

"Gawd help me, yes! Ain't it awful!"

"What are you going to give them? How to teach geography, I suppose?"

"I could even get away with that in the frock I'm going to wear! The softest, most alluring French blue georgette!" she said enthusiastically.

"Anything I say will be well received in that garb! I'm trying to collect suitable shoes and hat to go with the frock, seeing the hard-boiled shoes and hat I'd just invested in, before I'd dreamed of buying this dainty frock, would be a thought too harsh. If I'd only known," she lamented, "that I was going to buy that luscious georgette, I'd have bought entirely different shoes and hat! Isn't it tragic they don't match?" she wailed.

"Good Lord, are you confusing a teachers' institute with a fashion show? I asked you what you're going to talk about to those teachers?"

"What would you advise?" she asked confidingly.

"Do you mean to say you haven't anything ready and the meeting booked for day after tomorrow?"

"I don't know any of the teachers, so I don't know their tastes."

"Tastes! Do you think you're expected to treat them to a vaudeville stunt? You're supposed, child, to dis-

also, that she'd got some interesting mail from England—"

He paused again tentatively. Meely held herself rigid that he might not detect the tremor that went over her at his words.

"Good night," he said abruptly—and before she quite realized he was going, he had disappeared in the dimness of the road.

St. Croix Creighton and his father, dining at the Ritz-Carlton in Philadelphia, were discussing a certain matter not at all connected with the business of the directors' meeting which they had come to the city to attend.

If the infatuated eyes of Nettie Schwenckton could have beheld St. Croix just now—his evening clothes making him look taller, more slender, more than ever like the young god of her romantic air castles, she would indeed have thought her "honor" a small price to pay for any least notice such a divine creature might bestow upon her. Little did that enamored maiden dream that at that very moment her name was on the sacred lips of her demi-god, her image in his thought.

St. Croix, in his desperation that afternoon, after Meely's amazing rebuff, determined, on his way to his car, that he would pique her into a regard for him by exciting her jealousy; she herself had given him the hint when she had explained her silence about the teacher's boarding with them. He would make love to that school teacher under her very eyes! Meely should be made to see how other girls in her station, or in any station, for that matter, jumped at his nod!

And then he had seen, as he supposed, the school teacher in his brother's company; coming out of her schoolhouse hours after the closing time, apparently in a relation with him of the utmost friendliness. This was the third time in ten days that he had seen Marvin come out of that schoolhouse! His official duties certainly did not take him there so often as that. St. Croix was genuinely worried over the circumstance, as well as irritated at being foiled in his plan to make Meely jealous of the teacher, which of course he could not do if Marvin were intrigued with her.

Over their cigarettes and coffee St. Croix was shifting his own apprehensions about his brother on to his father's broad shoulders.

"The danger is, you know, Father, that Marvin might take it into his cracked head to marry one of these common country teachers! If he happened to fall in love with one of them, her station or breeding wouldn't stop him!"

"Her station wouldn't. Her breeding would. Marvin's fastidious."

"Within limits," St. Croix doubtfully admitted.

"Bad breeding would be a limit for him."

"I wouldn't trust him! He'd be just fool enough to think he could raise her to his level. You know what he is—all for leveling and equalizing!"

"I ought to know what he is! I've suffered enough from what he is!" Mr. Creighton said bitterly. "Takes after his mother. Never got his crazy radical slant from me!"

"Mother's not radical."

"She's tolerant. Tolerant of anything!"

"Much too tolerant of Marvin's freakishness!" St. Croix grumbled.

"Yes, if she'd only stand squarely with me about the boy—" Mr. Creighton paused and shook his gray head.

"No—no use. What good has it done, my taking the extreme stand I have?—even ordering my own son out of my house!" he exclaimed, a pained look in his eyes that made St. Croix, who was fond of his father, curse his brother in his heart. "I thought he'd come back cured in a month at most! But what does he do? Gets himself a good job and goes to work! More confirmed than ever in his wrong-headedness! I'm seriously thinking of asking him to come home again. Might as well. He'll never change. And it makes your mother so unhappy—his being away!"

"And the d—d gossip it makes!" St. Croix frowned.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

"The Danger is, You Know, Father, That Marvin Might Take It Into His Cracked Head to Marry One of These Common Country Teachers!"

ness some pedagogical problem or theory for their edifying! Now I'll admit you've some rather good ideas, if you could put them over—"

"It won't matter what I say—they'll be too taken up with looking at my blue French georgette—"

She was off on the frock again and she sang its praises for the next two minutes without intermission, until they had reached the Schwencktons' gate.

As they stopped, Meely suddenly realized, with a passing anxiety, that she had been entirely neglecting to attend to her recent—she had been saying "jawgette" and "Muttah" and "teach-ah."

"Oh, come in and see Aunt Rosy. Will you?"

"Sounds tempting—but I hardly have time; I always spend Thursday evening with my mother, as my father is never home then; he attends a directors' meeting in Philadelphia every Thursday." He paused; then added slowly, deliberately, "Mother phoned me she particularly wanted to see me this evening, as she'd found an old photograph I'd asked her to look for—"

Scarlet Uniform Not Conspicuous in Field

The writers of American school histories have frequently taken occasion to remark scornfully upon the scarlet uniform worn by the British regulars in the campaigns against the Indians during Colonial days, but, as a matter of fact, the scarlet coat of the Briton was a less conspicuous uniform than the blue subsequently adopted for the army of the United States.

Careful experiments have brought out the fact that light gray, such as that worn by the West Point cadets, is the color first lost to sight in the field. Scarlet comes next, with dark gray, blue and green in the order named. In target practice it has been found that of all colors scarlet is most difficult to hit. Light green is almost invisible under the violet tinge of elec-

tric lights, and would, therefore, be an excellent color for the uniforms of naval scouts who would be exposed to the rays of an enemy's searchlights.

Universal Passport

"Do not go West without money" is a Californian's advice to easterners. Good advice, and it may also be mentioned that it is equally good for those going East, North and South.—Boston Transcript.

Study Seldom Wasted

A man to whom three years of study have borne no fruit would be hard to find.—Confucius.

Idle talk can be very busy.

EX-COP ADMITS KILLING WOMAN WITH A HAMMER

Commits Atrocious Crime Because Girl Had Stolen 15 Cents From Him.

Montreal.—"She was hard to kill; I had to choke her and then use the hammer," was the way Jules Coulombe, ex-policeman and carpenter, described to another woman how he had killed Bessie Dalley, an occasional visitor to his home, because, he said, she had stolen 15 cents from him.

The ex-policeman was under arrest for the murder of a Quebec painter named Arthur Richard, whose torso was found frozen in the snow on the roof of a shed outside of his bedroom window. Evidence was given at the coroner's inquest that Coulombe had hacked off the head and limbs and burnt them in his stove.

Body Is Burned.

This much the ex-policeman had confessed to the city police, but a further sensation was caused when Blanche Laurendeau, a woman who had come casually to the house of Coulombe two months ago for a drink and stayed two months with him, told



She Was Hard to Kill.

the court she had been in the house when Coulombe had killed the other woman after a terrific struggle, and had cut her body in pieces and fed it to the flames in the stove.

"It was some time about the middle of December that Jules Coulombe murdered her," said the woman. "I did not see the crime committed but I afterward saw her body cut up and burned. Jules told me he had quarreled with Bessie because she said she had stolen 15 cents from him. I heard them struggling and fighting upstairs. Bessie was screaming and Coulombe was shouting curses. Then there was a silence and Jules came down stairs with his hands all blood. I was terrified."

Confesses Killing.

"She was hard to kill; I had to choke her and then use the hammer," he told me. Next day I saw her body in the upstairs room. The face was all smashed in and there were marks on the throat. Jules cut off her arms, her legs and her head and then cut up her body and burned it all in the stove. He threatened me and I was too scared to tell anybody or to leave the place.

"I came from St. Pierre d'Orleans and don't know anybody here. It was just by chance I came there. He gave me a drink and I stayed on for two months."

Drops Huge Grizzly With His Last Bullet

Vancouver, B. C.—With only one shot left in the magazine of his rifle, Alvin Woods of Ocean Falls, B. C., succeeded in bringing down his first grizzly bear after the huge animal, although wounded by four bullets, had charged to within 25 feet of him.

Woods, with two companions, established his hunting camp recently on the Big Salmon river, 100 miles north of Prince George, after learning that the bears were numerous, and had virtually gone without hibernating this winter, owing to lack of salmon last fall.

Woods sighted his grizzly 150 yards away. His first shot hit bruin on the forepaw. Uttering ferocious roars, the bear charged toward Woods, who fired three shots into it at 50 yards, but failed to stop the animal.

Twenty-five feet from the crouching hunter the grizzly paused, reared on its hind legs, then started to advance with savage growls. Retaining his nerve, Woods aimed at the left breast and dropped his bear. The pelt was one of the largest ever taken out of the Prince George country.

Bears are very ferocious, said to be owing to the small amount of fish reaching the upper tributaries of the rivers.

Fall Is Fatal

Cedar Rapids, Iowa.—Thomas Gillin, forty-four, is dead here from injuries received when he fell from a 50-foot water tower at Mount Vernon. He had been working on the tower for six weeks and had only one hour's work left to do when he fell.

Wrong Place to Dance

Dover, Ohio.—Dancing to the music at a Salvation Army meeting cost J. J. Rocco a fine of \$10.



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A Gentle Hint

Visitor—And is that all? Flower Garden Guide—Yes, you have seen all the flowers, but the—forget-me-nots!

Nobody loves a sham.

The Loser's End

"Did you go to the bridge?" "Yes, indeed, and I haven't got over it yet."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

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